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SHORT STUDIES
OF THE
HEROES OF THE EARLY CHURCH

EMMA A. ROBINSON



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SHORT STUDIES

OF THE

Heroes of the Early Church

By
Amelia
EMMA A. ROBINSON, 1863-



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Inscribed to
A Hero-loving Boy,
MY NEPHEW RHEA

CONTENTS

STUDY	PAGE
INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	7

I. IN JERUSALEM.

I. THE UPPER ROOM, - - - - -	13
II. THE FIRST GREAT REVIVAL, - - - - -	21
III. THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES, - - - - -	27
IV. PETER THE LEADER, - - - - -	34
V. THE FIRST DEACONS, - - - - -	43
VI. OTHER LEADERS, - - - - -	51
VII. SOME JERUSALEM CHRISTIANS, - - - - -	56

II. IN JUDEA—SAMARIA.

VIII. THE GOSPEL EXTENDED BY PHILIP, - - - - -	65
IX. THE BOYHOOD OF SAUL, - - - - -	71
X. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL, - - - - -	78

III. UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH.

XI. A VISITATION OF THE CHURCHES, - - - - -	87
XII. THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH, - - - - -	93
XIII. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY, - - - - -	101
XIV. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY— ANTIOCH TO ATHENS, - - - - -	109

Contents

STUDY	PAGE
XV. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY— ATHENS TO SYRIA, - - - - -	119
XVI. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY— ANTIOCH TO EPHESUS, - - - - -	125
XVII. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY— EPHESUS TO PHILIPPI, - - - - -	131
XVIII. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY— PHILIPPI TO JERUSALEM, - - - - -	137
XIX. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT, - - - - -	144
XX. A NOTABLE VOYAGE, - - - - -	151
XXI. THE SHIPWRECK, - - - - -	158
XXII. ROME, - - - - -	164
XXIII. LETTERS FROM ROME, - - - - -	169
XXIV. PAUL'S LAST YEARS, - - - - -	174
XXV. THE APOSTLE JOHN IN THE EARLY CHURCH, -	181

INTRODUCTION

SHORT STUDIES of the Heroes of the Early Church is the name selected for the third book in the series of Bible Study books for the Intermediate Section of the Junior League.

If the heroic element lent a charm to the study of Old Testament characters, it must give an added interest to the study of these makers of the early Church, whose every-day life was so full of heroism for the cross of Christ, and who, with one exception, gave his life for the Master.

It would have been interesting to carry out the plan of the Character Studies, as in the first book of the series; but, in order to make the setting clear, it has been necessary to confine this book to sketches rather than stories, that in these studies of the heroes we might also give the history of the Apostolic Church.

Some of the surroundings have been gathered from books portraying the peoples and customs of the times, and have been woven into the sketches because of the light they throw on the subject matter of the Bible narrative.

In regard to the dates suggested, no intima-

Introduction

tion is given that there is a divergence of opinion, as the best authorities are pretty generally unanimous in regard to the larger proportion of them. Where this is not so, the dates have been omitted.

In connection with this study the boys and girls will be interested in the reading of the Book of Acts as a whole. Ask them to read it all in one week, just as they would read any other history. This is a much more interesting plan than the reading in small sections.

The memory work for the third year is based on this book, and we suggest that, so far as possible, the Memory Verses and Prayers be memorized, or that the Intermediates be asked to prepare their own Memory Books, writing in them each week a Memory Verse and a prayer; these to be taken from any of the study books or directly from the Bible. Encourage originality in the preparation of these books.

The suggestions to leaders for the use of this book in the class do not differ very materially from those given in the previous book, and therefore will not be repeated. A few additional suggestions are given.

1. Care should be taken that the text-book does not supplant the use of the Bible among the boys and girls. Each should own his Bible,

Introduction

and use it constantly, both in class and for home study, where this is done.

2. In the preparation of the Hero Story Books, encourage the Juniors to read carefully the Bible narrative and include in their stories many of the interesting details, which, for want of space, were omitted from the text-book.

3. In the map-work much interest may be created by making a study of the places visited by the different apostles, as many of them were places of importance in the world of that day and in the history of all times. In these places we find some of the Seven Wonders of the World, the homes of some of the great leaders and teachers, and many other things that boys and girls enjoy knowing.

4. At the age of the Intermediates, the artistic and esthetic element predominates. The book-work, if of interest to them, must be beautiful and attractive. Let the covers for the books be prepared in the beginning, and the stories added from week to week.

The covers should be made a work of art. If all members of the class have not the ability to make attractive covers, with water-color paper and paints, the stencil work now so much used in the public schools will make it possible for each to have a pretty book.

If the Junior Superintendent is not informed

Introduction

in regard to the making and use of stencils, one of the neighboring public-school teachers will gladly give the needed information.

A wide margin may be left on the story pages and each story illustrated with cuttings from magazines or with original drawings. Where a loose leaf note-book cover is used, it may be made attractive by the mounting of a picture of appropriate size on the front cover.

5. The memory verses and prayers are quoted from the American Revised Bible, in order that the Juniors may grow to love this text even as the present generation love and revere the King James version.

6. For reference the following books are recommended, in addition to a Teachers' Bible and Bible Dictionary (some of these will be found in the pastor's library):

"The Life and Epistles of Paul." Conybeare and Howson.

"The Life of Paul." Farrar.

"Paul of Tarsus." Bird.

Bibles Atlas. Rand and McNally.

PART I

THE CHURCH OF JERUSALEM

SHORT STUDIES

OF THE

Heroes of the Early Church

CHAPTER I.

THE UPPER ROOM.

MEMORY VERSE.

"But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." ACTS 1: 8.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Peter's Commission. John 21: 15-19.
2. The Great Commission. Matt. 28: 16-20.
3. Command to tarry at Jerusalem. Acts 1: 4.
4. The Promise of Power. Acts 1: 8; Luke 24: 49.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

5. The Ascension. Luke 24: 50, 51; Acts 1: 9-11.
6. Matthias chosen. Acts 1: 15-26.
7. The Holy Spirit given. Acts 2: 1-13.

STORY.

The disciples and followers of Jesus were alone. After that morning by the sea when the Master had given to Peter the thrice-repeated commission, "Feed My sheep," He had bidden them go to Jerusalem. From there, one morning, He had led them out to the Mount of Olives near Bethany, perhaps in sight of the house where He had been so many times the guest of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

Here He paused to give to them some final instructions. As He said to them, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth," He raised His hands as if to bless them, and even as He spoke, while every eye was fastened upon Him, He rose slowly from the earth, and as they looked, a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Spellbound, the disciples stood motionless, their eyes fixed on the place where but a moment before they had seen Jesus. How long

The Upper Room

they might have stood thus can not be told, for suddenly two men in white apparel stood in their midst, and said to them: "Why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like maner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." Then the disciples returned to Jerusalem, remembering that Jesus had told them to remain there until the Holy Spirit had come upon them.

That night they assembled in a large room in the home of one of the disciples; probably in the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. It may have been that this was the same room where they had eaten the last supper with Jesus, and here, as they finished their meal, they called to mind the commandment of Jesus, and in remembrance of Him they partook of the Lord's Supper.

Jesus had said, "Tarry in Jerusalem," but the disciples were poor men, and to tarry in Jerusalem meant that they must at once find work. In their own country of Galilee many of them had been fishermen, and it was not easy to adapt themselves to city ways; but work they must have. Just what they found to do is not known; but every evening, when the work of the day was over, found them together in the "upper room."

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

One of their first acts was to elect some one to fill the place of Judas. Two men, Barsabas and Matthias, were selected. Lots were then cast for the two, and Matthias was chosen.

The great feast of the Jews, the Day of Pentecost, was at hand, and strangers from all over the country arrived hourly, until Jerusalem was literally full of people of every nation. When the Day of Pentecost was fully come, early in the morning the disciples with one accord hastened to the upper room; not alone the Twelve, but others to the number of one hundred and twenty, who had gathered daily to await the fulfillment of God's promise.

This morning, as they sat at the feet of those who were instructing them, wondering, possibly, if this might not be the day for which Jesus had bidden them wait, suddenly there came a sound as of a rushing mighty wind from heaven, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. Startled by the unexpected sound, each looked to the others for an explanation, but only to meet a new wonder; for as he looked, each saw, resting upon the other, a cloven tongue like as of fire.

With an intuition sent from God, they knew that this was the fulfillment of the promise of Christ; that the Holy Spirit, who was to

The Upper Room

give them power to work for Him, had come. The news of some strange happening spread rapidly; people gathered about the house; they even crowded into the upper room to learn the cause of the unwonted sound that many had heard. The disciples could not keep quiet; they must talk and tell of this wonderful power which each felt within himself, and which made him want every one else to have the same power.

But, wonder of wonders, these men were all Jews; and yet, as they spoke, every man in that city, from whatever country he had come, heard them speak in his own language. Some looked with awe and reverence upon this wonder; others began to mock them, and say that they were drunken.

Some one must explain this great miracle; but they had not known in what way the Holy Spirit would come, and no provision had been made for anything like this. Instinctively they seem to have turned to Peter, and he who had denied Christ, was given the honor of defending Him, and His gift of power, and by this act, virtually became the leader of this little band that was the beginning of the great Christian Church.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 1. The world of the Early Church.

Plan 1 gives simply the outline of the countries to which the activities of these Heroes of the early Church were in the main confined.

In designating Galilee and Jerusalem the home of the disciples during the life of Christ, and the center of the activities of the apostles after the resurrection, note how small a portion of the country was touched by Christ Himself, in proportion to that reached during the lifetime of the apostles.

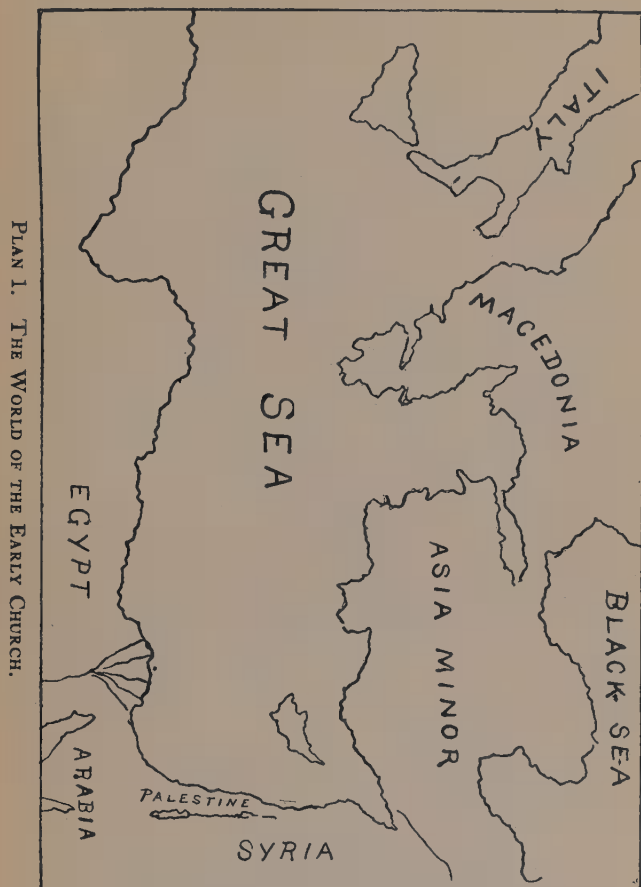
SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Who wrote the Book of Acts?
2. Why do the angels call the disciples "Ye men of Galilee" in Acts 1: 11?
3. To Whom does Peter refer in Acts 1: 15-20?
4. Where does Jesus promise the coming of the Holy Spirit, and what other name does He give Him?
5. How far does Jesus command the disciples to witness for Him, and in whose power?

HEART TALK.

The promise of power was not alone to the disciples gathered in the upper room, but

The Upper Room



PLAN I. THE WORLD OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

to every one into whose life God sends His Holy Spirit.

To-day the Holy Spirit in our hearts will make our lives witnesses for Him to those about us every day, and if we are living witnesses for Him at home, we will be ready to go anywhere He may want us to go, to witness for Him.

PRAYER.

"Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that shall believe on Me through their word." JOHN 17: 20.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST GREAT REVIVAL.

MEMORY VERSE.

"We must obey God rather than men."
ACTS 5 : 29.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Peter's sermon. Acts 2 : 14-36.
2. The prophecy of Joel. Joel 2 : 28-32.
3. The quotation from David. Psalms 16 : 8-11.
4. The result of Peter's sermon. Acts 2 : 37-47.
5. The miracle at the Beautiful Gate. Acts 3 : 1-10.
6. Peter's sermon. Acts 3 : 11-26.
7. The arrest and trial of Peter and John. Acts. 4 : 1-22.

STORY.

Peter stepped out from among the Twelve. The disciples, who had risen to their feet, and whose speaking in strange tongues had aroused the tumult, seated themselves in rows in front of him.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Facing them, and quieting the multitude, Peter said, "These are not drunken as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day, but this is that which hath been spoken."

Then, knowing full well the awful reverence of the Jews for the prophets, he began with a quotation from the prophet Joel, and proved to them that what they had just seen and heard was a fulfilment of that prophecy; then, quoting from David, he went on to prove that Jesus was the Messiah of the Old Testament, closing with these words: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

Those who heard him could not resist the power of his words, and many came to Peter and the other disciples, saying, "What must we do?" The disciples had just one answer for them, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." The rite of baptism was administered at once, and about three thousand were added to the number of believers in Christ that day. These met regularly for instruction and worship, others were added to them daily, and there was great rejoicing among them.

The priests and rulers did not realize how

The First Great Revival

this little band was increasing in numbers, until their attention was attracted by a miracle which drew many to Christ. As Peter and John were going into the temple for worship a lame beggar lying at the Beautiful Gate asked alms of them. Peter in reply said, "Look on us." The beggar, expecting money, did so; but Peter said: "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have, that I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." He took him by the hand, and the man stood up and walked into the temple with them.

Every one entering the temple had seen the lame man lying at the gate day after day, many of them knew him, and a crowd gathered about them at once. Again Peter turned them to Christ, and, in the sermon which he preached, proved to many that Jesus was the Messiah.

The gathering of this multitude aroused the fears of the high priest and rulers, and from this time they strove to silence the disciples and undermine their influence. Peter and John were imprisoned, beaten, and forbidden to teach in the name of Christ; but their answer was, "We can not but speak the things we saw and heard," and, being released, they returned to their brethren. After prayer to God, the Holy Spirit again manifested His presence with them, and they spoke even more boldly, and so many were

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

led to Christ that the Bible speaks of them as "the multitudes of them that believed."

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 2. Herod's Temple.

This plan should be studied in connection with Plan 3 or some good relief plan of Jerusalem, in order that the location may be understood.

The Beautiful Gate and Solomon's Porch will be the places of special interest.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How many quotations from the Old Testament are found in Peter's first sermon?

2. How many were added to the Church after that sermon?

3. By how many different names does Peter speak of Christ in the third chapter of Acts?

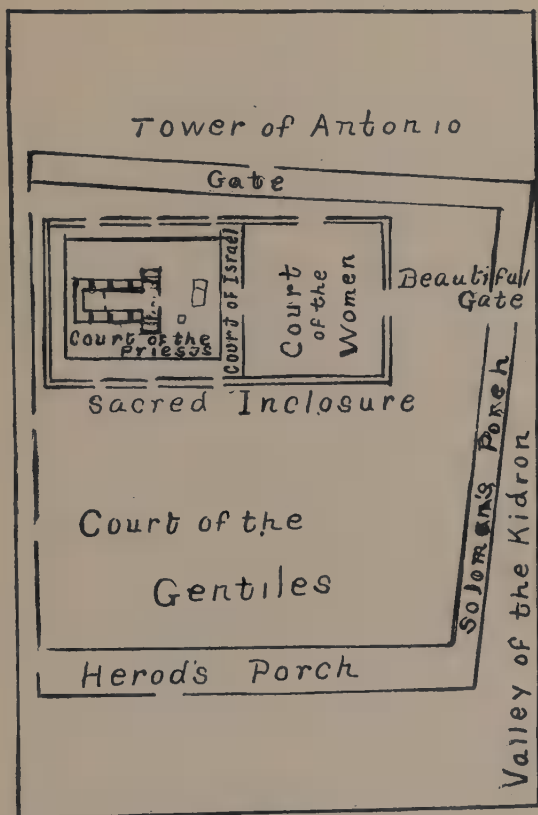
4. How many followers of Christ were there at the time of the first imprisonment of Peter and John?

5. Read the prayer of the disciples after their release from prison.

HEART TALK.

It is not necessary for any one to prove to us to-day that Christ is the Messiah, or that He is God's Son. The question for us is: "Is

The First Great Revival



PLAN 2. HEROD'S TEMPLE.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Christ my Savior?" If not, we are no better off than those Jews who did not believe in Him. If He is, we should do as did the Jews of old, be baptized and join ourselves to the number of Christ's followers, the Church.

PRAYER.

"O Lord, Thou that dids't make the heaven and the earth the sea, and all that in them is, . . . grant unto Thy servants to speak Thy word with all boldness." ACTS 4: 24-29.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH OF THE APOSTLES.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." ZECH. 4: 6.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The Lord's Supper. Acts 2: 42.
2. All things in common. Acts 2: 44-46.
3. The disciples still Jews. Acts 4: 1.
4. Preaching in the temple and at home.
Acts 3: 11; Acts 5: 42.
5. Growing opposition. Acts 5: 17, 33.
6. The second arrest. Acts 5: 17-32.
- 7 The advice of Gamaliel. Acts 5: 33-42.

STORY.

The great increase in the number of the disciples, at first thought, would seem to necessitate the organization and building of new churches; but at this time there was no Christian Church. The disciples were still Jews, attending the daily services in the temple, partici-

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

pating in its sacrifices and feasts, and observing Jewish customs. They were simply Christian Jews who believed that Christ was the Messiah of the Old Testament, and were more like a brotherhood within the Jewish Church, than like a separate Church.

The company had grown too large for the "upper room," though they still met there, and in other rooms that had been opened to them, for their evening meal together, and for the Lord's Supper which was eaten daily. The rest of their services, like those of other Jewish sects, were probably held on one of the porches of the temple, known as Solomon's Porch, and attracted little comment at first.

After the close of the Feast of Pentecost, many of those who had been added to the Church returned to their own homes, carrying the new religion with them, while in Jerusalem the Christians grew in number and strength. The most of these were very poor, and this may have led to the custom, which lasted for only a short time, of putting their money into a common fund that all might share equally. This even at the first was probably not compulsory. It appears as though those who wished to do so had part in this common fund, and many gave only part of their property.

The Church of the Apostles

From the beginning the followers of Christ were very liberal. The house of Mary was always open for their meetings. Barnabas, who was a man of some means, sold at least part of his land, and put the money into the common fund, and later the Churches outside of Jerusalem sent money many times to help the disciples.

The Jewish Church at this time was so burdened with rites and observances that no one might hope to keep them all, save those who devoted themselves to this alone. In great contrast to this, these early Christians had but two rites—the Lord's Supper, which in those days was a meal eaten together, and which symbolized communion or fellowship with Christ; and the rite of baptism, which symbolized the cleansing from sin or the washing away of the previous sinful life.

The Twelve were still looked upon as the special leaders. Their poverty, together with the fact that they were Galileans and unlearned men, made the priests and leaders of the Jews rather indifferent to them at first, but their teaching of the great love of Christ, which was so different from the narrow teaching of the temple, attracted many of the more influential people, and soon the priests and rulers became

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

restless and suspicious of the power of this new sect, and questioned how best it might be crushed out.

The disciples were again imprisoned; but an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, and when the officers came for them, in the morning, they were amazed to find them again in the temple preaching the gospel of Christ.

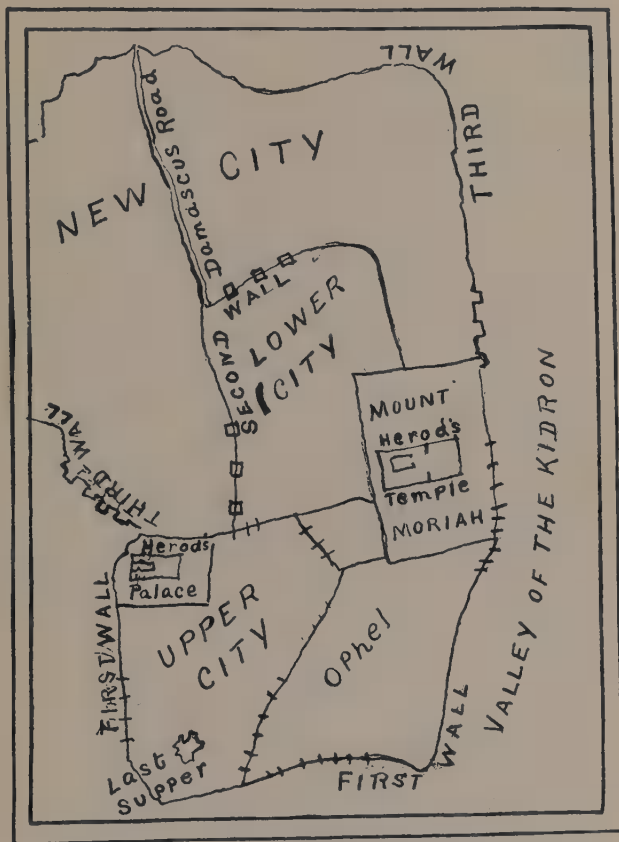
Then Gamaliel, a Rabbi, noted for his learning, advised that they be let alone; calling attention to other sects that had arisen, and seemed for a time to gain power and then died out, and saying: "If this work be of men, it will be overthrown, but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them lest haply ye be found to fight against God." For a time they listened to his counsel; the disciples were set free, though beaten and commanded to preach no more; but they rejoiced in persecution, and the Church grew mightily in members and in power.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 3. Jerusalem in the days of the apostles.

The city of Jerusalem, with its three walls and its many noted places, will prove an interesting study. Plan 3 gives the barest outline, and gives it especially for showing the loca-

The Church of the Apostles



PLAN 3. JERUSALEM IN THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

tion of the temple where the formal services were held, and the house where the last supper was eaten, and which very probably was the "upper room" of the apostles.

For the location of Solomon's Porch, reference must be made to Plan 2.

HEART TALK.

From a material view, this little Church did not have very much on its side; it was poor; its leaders were unlearned; it had no organization or home of its own; but it had what was worth more than all these—it had God's Holy Spirit as its motor power, and its success was insured from the beginning; no opposition could overthrow it; no persecution could discourage it.

To-day God's Spirit, as the motor power of your life, will give you just as much courage, will make you just as invincible as it did the Church of the apostles.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Who was Barnabas? Acts 4: 36, 37; 11: 22; 13: 1, 2.
2. What sin do we find in Acts 5: 1-11?
3. Where do we learn the meeting place of the disciples?
4. Who commanded the disciples to be witnesses? Acts 1: 7, 8.

The Church of the Apostles

5. Where do we find Christ's promise to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake?

PRAYER.

"Grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word." ACTS 4:29.

CHAPTER IV.

PETER THE LEADER.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." MATT. 16:16.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The call of Peter. Matt. 4: 18-22.
2. Peter the spokesman among the Twelve. Matt. 16: 16-25.
3. Peter a leader in the early Church. Acts 3: 1-11.
4. Peter's first tour. Acts 9: 32-43.
5. Peter's vision. Acts 10: 1-16.
6. Peter in prison. Acts 12.
7. Peter's first letter. 1 Peter 2: 1-11.

STORY.

And Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon and saith unto him, "We have found the Messiah." He brought him unto Jesus. Jesus looked on him, and said, "Thou art Simon, the son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is by interpretation, Peter)."

Peter the Leader

This is our introduction to Peter. He had been with John the Baptist, and probably was present at the time Jesus was baptized. Now he is brought face to face with Him to whom he is to give the rest of his life.

With his brother Andrew, and his partners James and John, he was a fisherman. He was not a poor man, for he had his home first at Bethsaida, and later in Capernaum. Here his house was large enough, not only for his own family, but for Christ and some of His followers also.

After his first meeting with Christ he went back for a short time to his regular work; then came the call, "Follow Me;" and he and his three partners left their nets and became the pupils of Jesus.

Peter was not what one would call a learned man, but he had what might correspond to a common-school education, and from the very first showed a strong spirit of leadership. He soon was recognized as the spokesman for the apostles, and Christ Himself seems to have looked upon him as such.

Very early in Christ's ministry we find Peter among the chosen three, who seem to be the close personal friends of the Master, and who are with Him, even when the others are not permitted to be there.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

It was Peter who voiced the belief of the Twelve when, in answer to Christ's question, "Whom say ye that I am?" he replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Eager, enthusiastic, impetuous, quick to speak the first thought that came to him, Peter frequently made mistakes; but Jesus saw in him the sturdy loyalty of his love, and the great possibilities of lifelong heroic service for Him.

When Christ implied that even the disciples would forsake Him, it was Peter who vehemently replied, "If all shall be offended in Thee, I will never be offended;" and yet, before the cock crew, he had three times denied ever knowing Christ; and then, almost broken-hearted at his own weakness, he went out and wept bitterly.

After His resurrection, Christ, in His thrice repeated question, "Lovest thou Me?" and in His commission to Peter to feed His sheep, seems to have showed His confidence in the sincerity of Peter's repentance, and his loyalty to Him; and to have restored him to his position of prominence among the Twelve.

While the acknowledged leader among the early Christians, Peter does not appear to have assumed any authority superior to that of the rest of the apostles, though the intensity of his character makes him prominent in all the great

Peter the Leader

events, in the early days of the Christian Church. A Jew of the Jews, he is as strongly bound to Jewish traditions as any of the apostles, yet he is among the first to be found outside of Judea preaching the gospel. Nevertheless it takes a vision from God to open his eyes, and prove to him that the gospel is intended for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Even then Peter did not understand that God's salvation was free to every one, for he insisted that all Gentiles must become Jews, before they could be baptized.

The persecution of the Christians in Jerusalem and Judea had scattered them; wherever they went they preached Christ; and Christian communities sprang up everywhere. Peter made a tour, visiting and strengthening these Churches. He is associated with Barnabas in the establishment of the Church at Antioch.

Soon after the martyrdom of James, Peter was again thrown into prison. This time the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and let Peter out. He went at once to the upper room at the home of Mary, where the disciples were gathered for prayer. When he rapped at the door, and the maid Rhoda announced that it was Peter, the disciples could not believe her; they were sure Peter was in prison. He had some difficulty in persuading them that

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

it really was he. Finally they opened the door. When he had told them of his wonderful delivery, he went away into Cæsarea to escape from Herod.

From this time not very much is heard of Peter. He seems to have completed his special work of establishing Christianity in Judea and Samaria, and there are others definitely called to take it to the ends of the earth. However, Peter has a part in this, for six years later he is present and takes an active part in the great Council at Jerusalem, where Paul is authorized to receive the Gentiles into the Church without their having first become Jews.

He visited and aided the Church at Corinth in its early days, and later went to Rome. It was during his residence here, about 68 A. D., that he probably wrote his first epistle. His close association with Paul at this time, and the probability that he had read at least part of Paul's epistles, would make it natural that he should closely follow these in teaching and style.

While this letter was written to warn Christians against certain dangers and to comfort and strengthen them, it was written especially for those Jews who were still found in every Church, and who needed the authority of the older apostles to confirm their faith in the re-

Peter the Leader

ligion which Paul taught, and which was so different from the old Jewish belief. Peter expresses in this letter his hearty agreement with the teachings of Paul.

For the later years of the life of Peter tradition is more abundant than history. He went to Rome during Paul's stay there, and had a part in founding the Church of Rome. He was martyred about the same time as Paul. Tradition says he was crucified, head downward, at his own request. The reason given for this request is, that Peter said he was not worthy to be put to death in the same way that his Master was, and that crucifixion with the head down, implied greater ignominy.

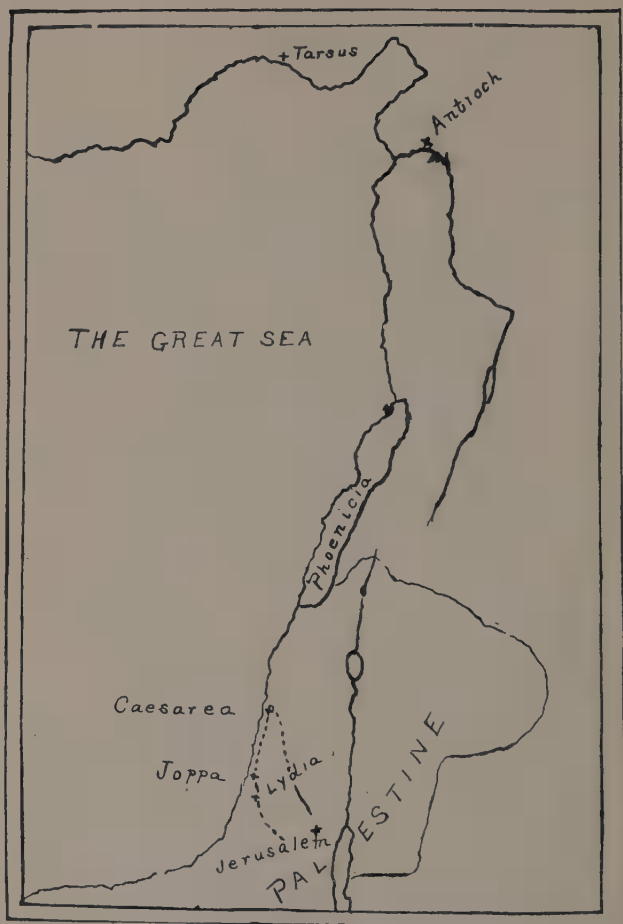
CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 4. The Field of Peter's Activities.

Plan 4, indicating the different places with which the name of Peter is connected, will emphasize the fact that the activities of this great leader were confined to a limited territory, and that God's special work for him was to a large extent the preaching of the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria.

The outline should be drawn and the places filled in as the story develops.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church



PLAN 4. THE FIELD OF PETER'S ACTIVITIES.

Peter the Leader

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How was Peter reinstated after his denial of Christ? John 21: 15-17.
2. How many recorded instances are there of Peter being imprisoned?
3. Which part of the Book of Acts gives the history of Peter?
4. What lesson did God teach Peter in chapter ten?
5. What two miracles did Peter perform in Acts 3: 1-9; 9: 36-42?

HEART TALK.

Perhaps among the Bible characters there is not one who brings more encouragement to each of us than Peter. He was so like us. He did love Christ, but so many times he forgot, or he spoke or acted without thinking; but Jesus felt that it was worth while for him to keep on trying.

It seems as though Peter must have felt a good many times that there was no use in his making an effort to be like the Master; but he did not give up, and after Pentecost, what a leader he was!

God thinks it worth while for each one of us to keep on trying. He sees the man or woman that we may be, and not the mistakes

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

and failures that so discourage us. Let us go on trying for the best there is in us.

PRAYER.

*"Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
 . . Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot
out all mine iniquities."* PSA. 51: 7, 9.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST DEACONS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."
ACTS 7: 56.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The choice of the deacons. Acts 6: 1-7.
2. Character of Stephen. Acts 6: 5-8, 10.
3. The accusation of Stephen. Acts 6: 9-15.
4. Stephen's defense.
 - (1) God's chosen people. Acts 7: 1-20.
 - (2) God's people trained under Moses. Acts 7: 20-43.
- (3) The first tabernacle and the application. Acts 7: 43-56.
5. The stoning of Stephen. Acts 7: 57-60; 8: 1.

STORY.

The Jews even before the time of Christ were great colonizers. Wherever an invading army carried away a little band of prisoners,

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

a Jewish colony sprung up. This naturally resulted in two parties—the Jews born in Judea, and speaking the Hebrew language, who were called Hebrews, and those born outside of Judea, speaking the Greek language, which at this time was the almost universal language of commerce, and who were called Greeks or Hellenists.

The Jerusalem Jews were always very poor, but among the Hellenists, already was seen the keen shrewd business instinct that marked the Jews of later days. One of the characteristics of the early Church was its great liberality, and in this the Hellenist converts were not one whit behind the Hebrews. However, as the Church grew in numbers, there were naturally some differences of opinion, and the day came when the Hellenists felt that, in the daily distributions of food among the poor, their widows were not fairly treated.

While it was a little matter, the apostles felt that there must be no lack of harmony among them. They had been called to the special work of teaching and preaching, and felt that they ought not to give their time to these temporal matters. This led to the first division in Church work. It was decided to set apart certain men whose special work should be to look after the business matters. Seven

The First Deacons

men, called deacons, were chosen for this. The men chosen were Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. While the names indicate that they might all have been Hellenists, it is probable that they were chosen from both parties.

These men were set apart for their work by the laying on of hands, which from this time seems to have become the customary form of ordination, or consecration to a special work.

Among these seven thus chosen were two, who exercised great influence in shaping the policy of the early Church—Philip, afterward known as the Evangelist; and Stephen, who seems to have been a man of marked piety and spiritual power, for he is characterized as a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.

The work of these men was not limited to the distributing of alms; for they also taught and preached, performing signs and wonders.

Stephen was a Hellenist, and no record is given as to when or how he became a Christian; some think that his recognizing Jesus "standing at the right hand of God" indicates that he had been one of His followers, before the crucifixion. As a Hellenist, he was broader-minded than the Jews who had grown up in the shadow of the temple, and was not so bound

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

by the traditions of the Pharisees; for this reason he could enter more fully into the spirit of Christ, as He taught of a salvation for all. He may also have seen that Christianity must stand by itself, and could not be a sect of the Jewish religion. The wisdom and power of his preaching attracted attention, and it was not long before the cry of blasphemy was raised. His teaching was too powerful, and he was not showing proper reverence and adoration for the temple; and even in the synagogues of the Hellenists there were those who were as strict in their belief as were the Hebrews themselves.

As with Christ, no case could be found against Him; so false witnesses were called in, and a form of trial was gone through. The accusation was the same as was brought against Christ: "We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us."

"And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. And the high priest said, Are these things so?"

The defense of Stephen is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible. Without a particle of fear, and with great eloquence, he held his

The First Deacons

audience. They did not intend to be influenced by anything he said; but, with the skill of an orator, he opened his defense by a review of the history of God's dealings with the Israelites, and their constant rebellion against Him; a history for which they had the most reverence. Then, turning suddenly, he accused them of such devotion to the traditions of their nation that they had simply followed its example when they murdered Christ.

Such was the power of his words that even these learned Rabbis were "cut to the heart." This made them even more angry with him. But Stephen had not yet finished. As he spoke he looked steadfastly toward heaven, and God, knowing his great courage and faithfulness, opened the doors, so that Stephen could look into heaven, and there he saw the wonderful glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

It was such a marvelous sight! It was the final proof of all that he had tried to teach, and with eyes still turned toward heaven he said, as though closing the unanswerable argument, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

The fury of the Sanhedrin broke loose at this. Here was blasphemy against God in its highest form. It was too dreadful for them to

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

even listen to. They stopped their ears as they hastened to cast him out of the city. There was but one punishment for such a crime, and they stoned him with stones, and Stephen, "calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" and when he had said this, he fell asleep.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 5. The Story told in Stephen's Defense.

A hasty review of the migrations of God's chosen people will add interest to Stephen's great address.

This map should be assigned to some one who will prepare himself so as to be able to step to the blackboard and, having drawn the outline, be able to fill in the map as the story is given by the leader for the day.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Before whom was Stephen tried?
2. With what event in Hebrew history did Stephen begin his address?
3. How many Old Testament characters does he mention?
4. How many Old Testament places of worship does he mention?

The First Deacons

5. What man is mentioned for the first time in connection with the stoning of Stephen?

HEART TALK.

Every one in God's service has an opportunity to prove his courage and loyalty, and



PLAN 5. THE STORY TOLD IN STEPHEN'S DEFENSE.

he who is filled with the Holy Spirit never fails. Stephen was chosen to have charge of the distribution of food, which might not seem a very high office; but he proved that no service for God is insignificant, and that even in

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

humble offices, if one is on the lookout, he finds great opportunities.

PRAYER.

"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

ACTS 7: 60.

CHAPTER VI.

OTHER LEADERS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"He findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, the Christ). He brought him unto Jesus." JOHN 1: 41, 42.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The first disciples. John 1: 36-50.
2. A publican who became a disciple. Mark. 2: 13, 14.
3. The appointing of the disciples. Mark. 3: 13-19.
4. Extract from letter of James. James, chapter 1.
5. A beautiful doxology. Jude.
6. The first martyr among the apostles. Acts 12: 1, 2.
7. The result of the council at Jerusalem. Acts 15: 22-31.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

STORY.

In the exodus from Galilee which followed the command of Jesus to His followers, to go into Judea, were found the eleven apostles with their families, the mother and brothers of Jesus, and many others.

The history of the early Christians is really the history of the work of these people. Among the leaders are the twelve apostles, though no account of the work of many of them is given in the Book of Acts. Andrew, who has the distinction of being the first of all the apostles to follow Jesus, and who seems to have been a man of influence, though so quiet in his way of working that we hear little of him, is not mentioned in the Book of Acts after the first chapter, though tradition tells of his preaching and final martyrdom:

The writings of the first centuries after Christ give accounts of all the apostles, and, according to these, all but one were martyred. The first to be thus put to death was James, the brother of John, who was killed by Herod, while he was preaching in Jerusalem.

Among the active leaders of these early Christians, we find two of the brothers of Jesus, who were prominent. These brothers had not been among the disciples when Jesus lived, but

Other Leaders

His resurrection had convinced them that He was the Son of God, and at once enlisted them in His service. The character of one of them, James, is evident from the title of "The Just," which was given to him. He was a strong character, and became the first bishop of the Church in Jerusalem. We are told that he had prayed so much that his knees had grown hard like those of a camel! He was a Hebrew and a regular worshiper in the temple. So strict was he that even the Jews who were not Christians respected him; but he was also faithful in teaching that Christ was the Messiah, and for this was stoned a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem.

He is the author of the Epistle of James, which was a letter written to the Jews who had been scattered all over the country by the persecution in Judea. In this letter he insists on a practical, active Christianity; that faith alone is not enough, but that the true Christian will be known by his works as well. Some one has said that "his epistle talks the least about Christ, but talks the most like Him." Many think that this was the last book of the New Testament to be written.

Jude, the other brother of Christ, did not take so prominent a place as did James, but his epistle, which has been called "the most

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

beautiful doxology in the Bible," shows the spirit of the man.

Barnabas, whose name is first mentioned during those early days in Jerusalem, won for himself the name of "The Son of Prophesying." He was evidently a man of some means, but, seeing the poverty of the disciples, he sold his land and brought the price of it to them. It was Barnabas who went after Paul and brought him to Antioch, and who was sent out, from that Church, with Paul on the first missionary journey. That the apostles had great confidence in him is shown by the fact that he was one of the men chosen to carry to the Gentile Churches letters from the great Council at Jerusalem. More will be heard of him in connection with Saul.

The apostle John, in a way, stands by himself, and will be studied in another story.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Name three things that James emphasizes in the first chapter of the Epistle of James.
2. How many chapters in the Book of Jude?
3. By what title does Jude call God in the last verse of his epistle?
4. How does James define religion in James 1: 27?

Other Leaders

5. Write a list of all the people whose names you can remember who belonged to the early Church in Jerusalem.

HEART TALK.

The people who get their names in the paper are not always the ones who do the most important things. The Book of Acts scarcely mentions the name of Andrew, and yet it was Andrew who first brought Peter to Christ. It does not mention anything that James had done, and yet Herod knew about him, and thought him a great enough preacher to put him to death.

We may not be able to do the things that seem big, but if we do each day the things that God has for us to do, we will be surprised some day to find how much they count in God's sight.

PRAYER.

"O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise." PSA.
51: 15.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME JERUSALEM CHRISTIANS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power, and love, and discipline."
2 TIM. 1: 7.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. In the upper room. Acts 1: 13, 14.
2. The home of Mary. Acts 12: 12.
3. John Mark. Acts 15: 37-39.
4. Silas. Acts 15: 40.
5. Those who were chosen deacons. Acts 6: 5.
6. The brothers of Christ. Acts 1: 14; Matt. 13: 55.
7. The women. Acts 1: 14; Luke 24: 10.

STORY.

Of the one hundred and twenty who were gathered in the upper room, or of the private members of the circle of the disciples, but few are named.

It will be easy to imagine some who were

Some Jerusalem Christians

there. Lazarus, if he still lived, would surely be there; Rufus and Alexander, the sons of Simon of Cyrene, who bore the cross for Christ, were not only among the Jerusalem Christians, but were among the first to carry the good news of Christ's gospel to others; and Matthias, who was chosen to fill the place of Judas, was among the number found in Judea; also Joseph Barnabas. Not only James and Jude, of Christ's brothers, but Simon and Joses, would be active in his service.

Among the women, Mary and Martha, Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Joanna, would not be missing, nor would the mother of John Mark; indeed, it is altogether probable that this very upper room may have been in her home. She appears to have been a woman of sufficient means to have a large home of her own. This home was always open to the disciples, and was evidently their regular place of meeting for prayer. It was to this home that Peter at once went when released from prison by the angel of God. The maid, Rhoda, was present at this prayer-meeting, and that she, too, was one of the members of this company is shown by her immediate recognition of the voice of Peter.

The young man, John Mark, appears to have been won for Christ by Peter. It is

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

thought by many that he was the amanuensis, or secretary, of Peter, and that the Gospel of Mark was written by him at Peter's dictation. John Mark started with Barnabas and Saul on their first missionary journey, but becoming faint-hearted, left them and returned home. For this reason Paul refused to allow him to go with them on the second journey. Barnabas, however, took him with him. In the Second Epistle to Timothy Paul asks that Mark be sent to him as a helper, and he probably remained with Paul in Rome till the time of his martyrdom. There is no authentic record of Mark after this time.

Silas is spoken of as a "prophet" or teacher in the Christian community at Jerusalem, and was sent with others to the Church at Antioch, where he became acquainted with Paul, whom he accompanied on his second missionary journey. With Paul he was imprisoned at Philippi. At Berea he was left with Timothy to build up the converts. He rejoined Paul at Thessalonica, and letters written from there are sent in the names of Paul and Silas. Paul also mentions him as a fellow worker, in his second letter to the Corinthians. From this time he seems to have dropped out from among the prominent workers, and nothing further is known of him.



Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

The Bible narrative could not give the account of nearly all who helped in the early days, and so has given us only those events which have had some marked effect in the making of the Christian Church.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How many brothers had Jesus among these disciples?
2. Who beside the disciples are mentioned as being assembled in the upper room?
3. In what way did Mary, the mother of John Mark, help?
4. Why did Paul refuse to take John Mark with him on his second missionary journey?
5. How did the belief of these people differ from the belief of those around them?

HEART TALK.

All about the early Christians were the Jews who did not believe in Christ. It was not easy to stand strong and true to what they believed. It was harder for the people who did not preach and teach than it was for the leaders, because it is always harder just to be true, than it is to do work that seems important. Then, too, their friends and neighbors would ridicule them or try to frighten them. But they had the power of God's Spirit, and so could

Some Jerusalem Christians

stand firm. The hardest work we have to do is just to be true day after day; but God's Spirit will help us even as it did the early Christians.

PRAYER.

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil one." JOHN 17: 15.

PART II.
IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GOSPEL EXTENDED BY PHILIP.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." ECCLES. 9: 10.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Philip set apart for special service. Acts 6: 1-6.
2. Philip in Samaria. Acts 8: 3-8.
3. Simon Magus. Acts 8: 9-13.
4. Peter and John in Samaria. Acts 8: 14-17, 25.
5. The mistake of Simon Magus. Acts 8: 18-24.
6. Philip and the Ethiopian. Acts 8: 26-40.
7. Philip and Paul. Acts 21: 8-15.

STORY.

The fury of the Jews, which led to the martyrdom of Stephen, resulted in a general persecution of the Christians, especially the Hellenists. Among the foremost in this perse-

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

cution was the young Rabbi, Saul, who, dressed in the pure white robe of the strict Pharisee, was not satisfied to drive the Greek Christians from Jerusalem, but went from place to place, arresting and imprisoning them. Among those driven from Jerusalem was Philip, one of the seven deacons, afterward known as the Evangelist. Forgetting the Jewish prejudice, he went down into the country of the despised Samaritans. So strong was the hatred of the Jews against these people that they were not even allowed to become members of the Jewish Church, or Jewish proselytes, as they were called.

Philip, however, like Stephen, must have felt as Paul did later, that Christ wished His gospel to be preached to all people; for he began preaching among the Samaritans, and many of them were led to believe in Christ. Among these was Simon Magus, a magician, who had great influence over the people. He, with a multitude of others, was baptized by Philip, though his later actions proved that he had not really understood Philip's message of salvation.

When the Church in Jerusalem heard of this work of Philip, they sent Peter and John down to help him. God showed His approval, by sending His Holy Spirit upon these Samari-

The Gospel Extended by Philip

tan converts, as He had upon the Jewish believers. They were really the first Gentile community recognized by the apostles, and this was the first step in the founding of a Christian Church instead of a Jewish sect of Christians.

We next find Philip on a journey toward Gaza. As he traveled, he came upon a chariot in which sat an Ethiopian reading aloud, as is the custom of the Orientals. As Philip drew near he was surprised to find that he was reading from the Prophet Isaiah. Going alongside of the chariot, Philip, with the freedom of his country, spoke to the Ethiopian, and asked him if he understood what he read. Something in his manner must have impressed the Ethiopian with his ability to help him, for he invited him to come up into his chariot. In this Philip again showed a broad-minded disregard of national and religious prejudice, for even at this time the descendants of Ham were a despised race; and while this subject of Queen Candace of Ethiopia had undoubtedly been up to Jerusalem to worship, he had not been allowed within the temple. He must have belonged to the class which they called proselytes of the gate, though they might more truly have called them proselytes outside the gate, for that was what it really meant.

As they rode, Philip showed the Ethiopian

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

how the words of Isaiah referred to Christ, and had come true in Him, and as he listened he believed. When they came to a stream of water he said to Philip, "See, here is water; what hindereth me to be baptized?" So they descended from the chariot, and Philip baptized him in the name of Christ; through him the gospel was sent into Africa.

During the Jewish war in A. D. 65, Philip probably fled from Palestine; for we next find him, with his four daughters, who had a gift of prophecy, in Cæsarea, where Paul spent many days with him, on his return from his third missionary journey. It was in the home of Philip, that Agabus the prophet tried to persuade Paul not to go to Jerusalem, prophesying that trouble awaited him there. But Paul, knowing that God had work for him to do in Jerusalem, would not be persuaded.

After this we know nothing of Philip; but his trustful obedience and alertness in availing himself of every opportunity of service, undoubtedly made his life one of continued power to the end.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 6. The Missionary Tour of Philip.

The scattering of the disciples by the persecution bring Samaria and the surrounding countries into the study.

The Gospel Extended by Philip



PLAN 6. THE MISSIONARY TOUR OF PHILIP.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Plan 6 gives the territory of Philip's first tour and also his final residence, Cæsarea.

For this plan the entire story is given in the Bible picture.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. When do we first hear of Philip?
2. What was the cause of his leaving Jerusalem?
3. How did Simon Magus show that he did not understand the power of Christ?
4. In which direction did Philip go when he first left Jerusalem and in which direction was he traveling when he met the Ethiopian?
5. What prophet came to the house of Philip to show Paul what would happen to him in Jerusalem? Acts 21: 11.

HEART TALK.

It is wonderful how one who has his eyes open finds things to do that others do not see at all. We often say, "There is nothing that boys and girls can do for Christ; at least, there is nothing I can do." Try Philip's plan. Keep your eyes open. If you see anything, do not wait to see if some one else will do it, but step into the opportunity, and trust God to help you do it in the right way.

PRAYER.

"Open Thou mine eyes." PSA. 119: 18.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BOYHOOD OF SAUL.

MEMORY VERSE.

"In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another." ROM. 12: 10.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The Scripture in the Mezuzah. Deut. 6: 4-9.
2. The training of Jewish children. Deut. 4: 1-9.
3. Another Jewish boy. 2 Tim. 1: 4, 5; 1 Tim. 3: 15.
4. The custom of wearing the praying shawl may have grown out of the command given in Num. 15: 37-39.
5. Pharisees. Matt. 5: 20; Luke 11: 42-44.
6. Rabbi Gamaliel. Acts 5: 34; Acts 22: 3.
7. Saul at the stoning of Stephen. Acts 8: 1-3.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

STORY.

In the days when Jesus was a boy in Nazareth, and when for the first time He went up to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover, another Jewish boy was growing up in the far-off Roman city of Tarsus.

His father, for some service rendered the Roman emperor, had been granted the great honor of Roman citizenship; but he was a Pharisee of the strictest sort, and when this baby boy was eight days old he was taken up to the temple, and given two names; one after the first king of Israel, Saul, and the other the Roman name, Paul.

In his father's home, as in every Jewish home, was a bright metal box, called the Mezuzah, in which were found words of the sacred Scriptures. Each person passing in or out the door touched this with his fingers, then kissed his fingers, as he repeated a few words of prayer or Scripture to himself.

Long before little Saul could speak, he was carried toward this shining box, and then, as his chubby fingers touched the pretty "play-thing," they were put to his lips, and he soon learned to kiss them, as the grown people did.

As soon as he was old enough, he was taught to pray, kneeling with his face toward

The Boyhood of Saul

Jerusalem. If he asked why he must always kneel that way, he was told about the great shining temple in Jerusalem. As his mother held him in her arms, she told him the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of Joseph in his coat of many colors; of the baby Moses, of whom God took such good care; of David and Solomon, and all the stories of the Old Testament.

When he was five years old, his father became his teacher, and his first lesson was the first verse of Deuteronomy, which his father or mother said to him in Greek, and which he repeated over and over till he knew it; then he learned the next verse in the same way.

At six years of age Saul must start to school. His father and mother had nothing to say about it, for the law had said that every Jewish boy must go to school at that age.

Look at the school-room—a little, dingy place, with no pictures, desks, or even seats. Every boy sat upon the floor; but he had no books to trouble him. There was not even a book for the teacher. In a singsong voice he repeated the lesson, and the pupils all repeated it after him; this was done over and over again till it was memorized. As every one repeated it aloud, a Jewish school-room was not a very quiet place.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Saul was now old enough to attend the services in the synagogue, and, with his mother, he would sit behind the lattice-work where he could hear the teacher read and pray and speak.

His mother made him a little praying shawl, like his father's, with blue tassels at the corners, to wear under his tunic, and he was taught never to put it on in the morning without repeating a prayer.

It seemed as though almost everything his father and mother did was a part of their religious worship, and though little Saul asked a great many questions, it took him a long time to learn it all; but every day he learned to feel more and more that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that He was their God only. He learned, too, that if he wished to please Him he must have nothing to do with strangers, and must not even be kind to boys who were not Jews.

Saul not only had to learn many parts of the Bible by heart, but there were hundreds of rules, which the Rabbis had made, that he must learn. He learned to write on a small flat piece of wood with chalk, and his copies were always Bible verses. These he must learn to write in both Greek and Hebrew.

By the time he was eight years old he could read well, and sometimes his father would al-

The Boyhood of Saul

low him to unroll one of the brown paper rolls, on which the books of Moses were written, and read them aloud to him in the Hebrew language, in which they were written.

A Jewish school had many holidays; for the Jews had frequent feasts, which every good Jew must attend. Although Jerusalem was four hundred miles from Tarsus, Saul's father, and many other Jews from Tarsus, went up every year to attend the Feast of the Passover, but the journey was too long and hard for the children.

At the age of thirteen Saul, like Christ, became what was called a "Son of the Law," and was now considered a man.

He graduated from the little synagogue school; but Saul was to be a great Rabbi, so he must study harder than ever. There was still another thing that he must do. Every Jewish boy must learn a trade; and with his father he began learning to make tents, and also to weave the coarse cloth of which the tents were made.

The time came at last, when, if he were to be a Rabbi, he must go up to Jerusalem, where he could study under the great teachers in the temple. He bids farewell to his mother, and, with his father and others going to attend the Passover, he makes the long journey, and is

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

entered as a student in the school of the Rabbis. Although but fifteen years old he now remains in Jerusalem, away from father and mother.

Under the great teachers, Hillel and Gamaliel, Saul learned the rules and beliefs of the Pharisees, and as he grew to be a young man he became more and more bitter against any one who was not a Jew and a Pharisee; for was not Jehovah the God of the Jews, and the Pharisees His chosen interpreters of His Word?

Saul never did anything by halves, and among all the young Rabbis he was the most strict. No service was too great, no requirement too rigid for him, and thus he developed the strong, forceful character that was, later, to make him the greatest leader in the Christian Church.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

For this lesson Plan 6 may be used, the city of Tarsus being added. The interest will be increased if some study is made of the city of Tarsus and its surroundings.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Where was the home of Saul?
2. What was Saul's nationality?
3. What right has he to call himself a Roman citizen?

The Boyhood of Saul

4. What languages did he speak?

5. How do we know he was a pupil of Gamaliel?

HEART TALK.

From the time Saul was a little boy all of his teaching made him a bitter enemy of those who did not believe, or think just as the Jews did, and so he was ready, when the time came, to lead in the persecutions of those who believed that Christ was the Messiah. After he knew Christ he learned a better way, and he writes to the Church at Rome and tells them to be kind to one another and to have respect for those who differ from them. Which Saul would you rather have for a friend?

PRAYER.

*"Teach me good judgment and knowledge;
for I have believed in Thy commandments."*
PSA. 119:66.

CHAPTER X.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

MEMORY VERSE.

"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things. JOHN 14:26.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The young man Saul. Acts 7: 58.
2. Saul the persecutor. Acts 8: 1-4; 1 Cor. 15: 9.
3. On the road to Damascus. Acts 9: 1-9.
4. The message to Ananias. Acts 9: 10-17.
5. Ananias and Saul. Acts 9: 17, 18.
6. Paul's account of his conversion. Acts 26: 8-20.
7. Persecution of Paul. Acts 9: 23-26.

STORY.

"And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul." This is the first mention of Saul in the Bible, and the witnesses were those who stoned Stephen.

The Jewish boy, so carefully trained in all

The Conversion of Saul

the laws and traditions of the Pharisee, was now a young Rabbi, who was one of those who consented to the death of Stephen. This was but the first step in a general persecution of the followers of Christ, in which they were scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria.

In this persecution the young man Saul was the leader. He went at this as he did everything else; entering every house he arrested not only the men, but the women also, and made sad havoc in the Church. Not satisfied with imprisonment, he put many to death; and yet, as he himself says more than once, he thought he was doing God service. In his eyes these men were blasphemers, and the only way to stamp out this new sect, which every one could see was gaining power, was to either destroy them or compel them to renounce Christ.

Many fled from Jerusalem, but Saul armed with letters from the high priest followed them even to Damascus, intending to bring them back as prisoners.

It would be interesting to follow Saul on this journey, but the Bible gives no intimations as to his route. He must have passed through Galilee, and here he would meet many people who had been with Jesus, and who believed in Him, because they had listened to Him and

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

seen the miracles which He had performed. As Saul rode on, he could not help being impressed with the simple faith and loyalty of these disciples; but ever and again he came back to the one conclusion, "They are untrue to the temple and the laws and traditions of Moses," and they must be crushed out. He pushed on more fiercely toward Damascus.

As he neared the city, tired, almost prostrated with the heat, and nearly blinded by the scorching rays of the sun, as it beat down upon the white stones of the road, suddenly there came a dazzling flash of light, and Saul fell to the earth. A voice said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Saul needed no one to tell him whose the voice was. He had been too honest and sincere in what he thought was the service of God, not to know His voice, and he answered, calling Him by name, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

The voice replied, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

This was a surprise. Jesus was speaking to him in God's voice? What could it mean? Had he been mistaken after all?

Trembling and astonished he said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and the voice replied, "Rise and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do,"

The Conversion of Saul

The men who were with him stood speechless with fear; for they saw the light and heard the voice, but could not understand the words.

When Saul rose from the ground they found that he was entirely blind, and they were obliged to lead him into the city. For three days he was in darkness, fighting the greatest battle of his life. It was not easy for him to give up those traditions and beliefs which he had spent his life in learning, and yet Jesus Himself had spoken to him. It was a hard struggle, but Saul was too true and great a man to say "No" to the voice of the Lord.

At the end of three days God sent a man named Ananias unto Saul, who said to him, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, has sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight, and he arose and was baptized.

Saul had studied for twenty years with the Rabbis in Jerusalem, but he must now learn new lessons; and this time he goes away from the temple, away from the Rabbis and teachers, into the desert, where he can be alone with the Great Teacher, and learn from Him the lessons and truths He would have him know.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

When Saul first appears in the synagogue preaching that Jesus is the Son of God, every one is amazed. Is not this the man that came here with letters to the priests? Is it not the man that took many of us bound to Jerusalem?

Never had there been such a preacher as this among them. All the vigor and learning which had been directed against the followers of Jesus was now enlisted in His service, and, with increasing power, Saul proved again and again, in the very face of the Jews of Damascus, that Jesus was the Christ.

So angered were they at his teaching that they watched the gates day and night, that they might kill him. At last he could no longer preach in Damascus, and, watching their opportunity, his followers let him stealthily down over the city walls, whence he escaped safely to Jerusalem, there to enter upon the great work unto which Jesus Himself had called him.

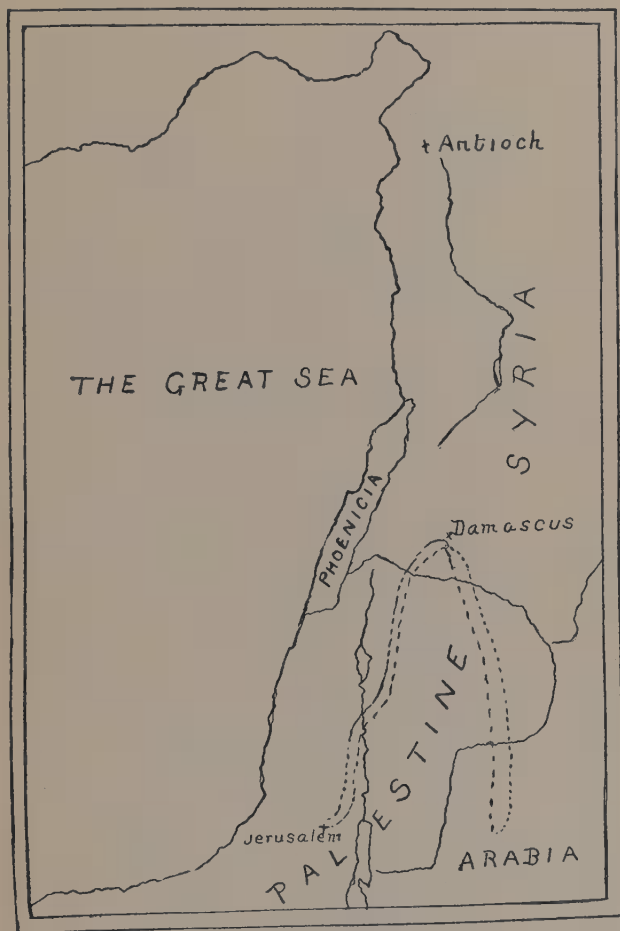
CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 7. From Jerusalem to Jerusalem.

The route of Paul, while not known, would very probably have led him in the direction indicated by the dotted lines from Jerusalem to Damascus, thence to the desert, back to Damascus, and, when driven from there, to Jerusalem.

He would have found the journey not an

The Conversion of Saul



PLAN 7. FROM JERUSALEM TO JERUSALEM.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

easy one, over the mountains and through the gorges, in the burning light of the sun reflected from the white stones of the roads and the mountain sides.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How many accounts of Saul's conversion are found in the Book of Acts?
2. What did God tell Ananias that Saul's work was to be?
3. What reason did God give Ananias for sending him to Saul?
4. Who were the first to turn against Saul?
5. How did they plan to prevent his escape?

HEART TALK.

There was no half-hearted service with Saul. When he found out that he had been in the wrong, he turned squarely about and worked just as hard on the other side. This is what is meant by Saul's conversion. He turned about and worked for instead of against Christ. No one can sit on the fence. If you are not for Christ you are against Him. To-day He wants you to turn squarely about, and "pitch in" on His side. Will you do it?

PRAYER.

"What shall I do, Lord?" ACTS 22:10.

PART III.

UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS
OF THE EARTH.

CHAPTER XI.

A VISITATION OF THE CHURCHES.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." ACTS 10:34.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Peter at Lydda. Acts 9:31-35.
2. Peter at Joppa. Acts 9:36-43.
3. Cornelius's vision. Acts 10:1-8.
4. Peter's vision. Acts 10:9-17.
5. Peter and Cornelius. Acts 10:18-33.
6. The Holy Spirit sent. Acts 10:33-48.
7. Peter and the Apostles. Acts 11:1-18.

STORY.

Following the conversion of Saul came a period of rest from persecution. The Churches in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria multiplied.

During these days of peace the Church sent Peter, on what was called, "an apostolic visitation," to all the Churches. Having visited the Churches on the way, Peter came to Lydda,

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

where he found a Church well established. Among the Christians here was a sick man, who had been in bed eight years. Peter said to him, "Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed." And straightway he arose.

The news of this miracle spread not only through the city, but to neighboring cities. At Joppa a woman, who had been very charitable and had done many things for the poor, was taken sick and died. Her friends had heard how Peter had healed Æneas, and they sent to him, asking him to come quickly to Joppa.

Peter returned with the messengers, and, coming to the house of Tabitha, which means Dorcas, he asked every one to leave the room. He then kneeled down and prayed to God. Turning to the woman, he said, "Tabitha, arise," and she opened her eyes and rose up.

Again the fame of Peter was great, and so many came to hear him that he remained for some time in Joppa, the guest of Simon, a tanner.

At this time there lived in Cæsarea a man whose name was Cornelius, who had heard of Jesus, and who greatly wanted to become His follower, but he did not understand this new religion.

While Peter was at Joppa God sent a mes-

A Visitation of the Churches

senger to Cornelius telling him to send for Peter. Cornelius was a Roman, not even a Roman Jew, and he may not have known that it would not be lawful for Peter, a Jew, to come into his house; but if he did, it made no difference, for he at once called his servants and ordered them to go to Joppa and bring Peter.

But what of Peter? God knew that Peter was too good a Jew to go into the home of a Gentile, and so, while the messengers of Cornelius were on the way, he sent to Peter a vision.

As he was on the house-top at noonday, he saw a sheet let down from heaven by the four corners, and in it were all kinds of birds, animals, and creeping things. A voice said to him, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat;" but Peter said, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean," anything that the Jews are forbidden to eat. The voice replied, "What God has cleansed, make not thou common." This was done three times, and then taken up into heaven.

Just then the message of Cornelius was brought to him, and Peter knew that God meant that he should go into this Gentile home. He does not hesitate, but goes with the servants, and when he is come to the house of Cornelius he learns how God has told this Roman centurion to send for him.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

He found also, that Cornelius had gathered his family and friends together to hear him, and, as Peter spoke, the Holy Spirit descended upon this company of Jews and Gentiles, and all were amazed.

Peter was convinced by this that the religion of Christ was for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and before leaving he baptized many of them in the name of Jesus Christ.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard how Peter had been in the house of Cornelius, and had baptized those of his household who were not Jews, they called him to account. Peter told them the whole story, concluding with these words, "If, then, God gave unto them the like gift as He did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?"

And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

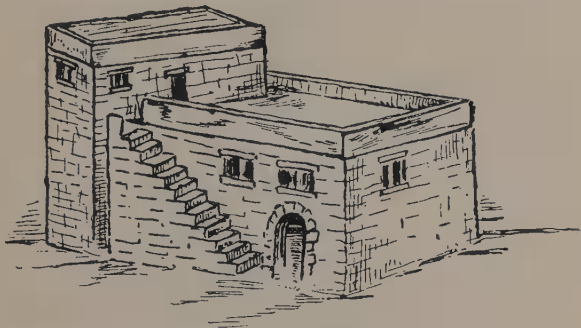
Plan 8. An Oriental house.

The journey of Peter may be traced on Plan 6, but for the crayon work to-day an Oriental house is given, indicating the outside stairway, the flat roof to which Peter had retired to pray

A Visitation of the Churches

when he saw the vision, and the door at which the messenger stood.

While there is some variety in the Oriental houses, the model given is of the general type.



PLAN 8. AN ORIENTAL HOUSE.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What was the result of the healing of Æneas.
2. Who was Tabitha?
3. What was the vision of Cornelius?
4. What was the subject of Peter's sermon in the home of Cornelius?
5. Did the apostles always remember what they said in Acts 11:18.

HEART TALK.

Sometimes there come into our schools or Sunday-schools those who are not our kind, and

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

we somehow have a feeling that they do not belong there. We may not be as outspoken as Peter was, but we just "let them alone." God had hard work to teach the Jewish apostles that His Church was a Church for every one, whether of their kind or not, but we ought to understand this better than they did. Shall we not open the doors of our Junior League and our Sunday-school class to every one for whom Christ died?

PRAYER.

"Teach me, O Jehovah, the way of Thy statutes." PSA. 119:33.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH.

MEMORY VERSE.

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." ACTS 11:26.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Barnabas. Acts 4:36, 37.
2. Saul and the disciples in Jerusalem. Acts 9:26-28.
3. Driven from Jerusalem. Acts 9:28-30.
4. Christ preached in Antioch. Acts 11:19-21.
5. Barnabas sent to Antioch. Acts 11:22-24.
6. Saul sent for. Acts 11:25, 26.
7. The generosity of the Christians at Antioch. Acts 11:27-30.

STORY.

Escaping from Damascus, Saul made his way toward Jerusalem. Three years before he had left there, armed with authority from

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

the high priest to bring all Christians, bound, to Jerusalem; and now he was going back, a Christian himself. He had changed the spotless white robe of the Pharisee, for the brown coat and striped turban of the traveling Jew. No one recognized him as the cruel young Rabbi, as he preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath, or spoke so reverently of Christ.

When he came to the villages which Christ had visited, he stopped to talk with the people about Him, and listened eagerly to all they had to tell. At last he drew near to Jerusalem. One can almost see him stand with bowed head, as again he looks upon the temple; but this time he sees not Gamaliel or Hillel, not even the high priest, but he sees Jesus, as He stood in the temple courts and taught the people. From this time there is but one vision for Saul—Jesus Christ, his Savior: the Savior of the world.

He would be glad to linger long, thinking of all that has happened in and about Jerusalem; but he moves on, and comes into the city.

How strange it must seem for him, instead of reporting at once to the high priest, to go to the home of Mary, where he knew the disciples held their meetings!

He meets Barnabas, whom he may have known before, and who listens with great interest as Saul tells of all that has befallen him;

The Church in Antioch

when the story is ended, the warm-hearted Barnabas extends his hand in welcome.

The other disciples, however, are suspicious of him at first, and draw back. This must have hurt Saul, and yet, as he looked back at the fierceness of his persecutions, he was not surprised. With Barnabas as his friend he gradually won the confidence of the others. Peter was one of the first to admit him into the fellowship of the disciples; he even invited him into his own home, where he learned many things that he could learn only from one who had been with Jesus.

Soon Saul began preaching in the synagogues, where he had formerly persecuted the Christians, and he preached with even greater zeal and earnestness than he had persecuted. His friends of the other days were enraged. They formed a league against him. He should be stoned, even as Stephen had been. A few old friends, however, were true to him, and he was warned. He was disguised and hurried out of the city.

He now turns his face toward his old boyhood home in Tarsus. How will they treat him there? Will they, too, drive him out? The brown-coated Jew enters the city, and immediately takes up his trade of tent-making. His friends are glad to see him; but when the

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Sabbath day comes and he stands up in the synagogue preaching Christ, many at once become his enemies; but he speaks with such confidence that what he is saying is true, that others believe him and he soon has quite a following.

While Saul was in Tarsus, Barnabas was sent to Antioch to preach to the Christians who fled to that city. The interest here is so great, and the people are so anxious to know about Christ, that Barnabas thinks Saul is the best man for them.

He goes, himself, to Tarsus in search of him. Saul gladly leaves his work there, and together they return to Antioch. Reaching the city, Saul goes immediately to the Jewish quarters. His first work is to find a room in which he can carry on his trade, for he must earn his own living. Then, too, he must have a place where people can come to talk with him.

It was not long before he was preaching in every synagogue. His texts from week to week we do not know, but from his letters we know the subject of all his sermons. "Jesus the Christ!" were words which those people must have heard over and over again.

For one year Saul preached in Antioch, and people from all over the city came to hear him. Crowds thronged the synagogues, not alone Jews but many Gentiles, and again and again

The Church in Antioch

they heard the words, "Jesus the Christ! Jesus the Christ!"

Every one was talking of the meetings. Soon here and there in the city streets one might hear the name "Christians," followers of Christ. It was a new name; no one had ever heard it before, but somehow it seemed so suitable that it soon came to be generally adopted as the name for Christ's followers.

While such great things are going on in Antioch, the Christians in Jerusalem are having a hard time. A famine had spread over the land, and food was scarce. The news reached Antioch, and the Church at once decided to send relief.

An offering was taken, and Saul, Barnabas, and a young Christian named Titus were selected to purchase supplies and take to the brethren in Jerusalem; thus Antioch took its place in the Church of Christ, its members helping one another, and ministering to the necessities of others as Christians always must.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 9. From Jerusalem to Tarsus.

In going from Jerusalem to Tarsus, Paul might have taken either of two routes. He might have traveled northward from Jerusalem to Antioch by land, from there to Seleucia, and

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church



PLAN 9. FROM JERUSALEM TO ANTIOCH.

The Church in Antioch

thence to Tarsus; or he might have gone from Jerusalem to Cæsareâ, and thence by water to Tarsus, in which case he would probably have touched at Seleucia.

In his choice of routes he would have been governed by the time of the year. Not being able to ascertain this, we are left in uncertainty as to his route, but on the plan have indicated the water route as more probably the one selected. In any event, his return to Antioch would be by boat.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Who would Saul be apt to meet in the home of Mary?
2. To whom did those who were scattered by the persecutions preach?
3. What is the meaning of the name Christian?
4. How many times has Saul been persecuted thus far?
5. Name the different places where we know that Saul preached.

HEART TALK.

Saul had studied for many years in the preparation for his work as a Rabbi. When he found Christ he went away into the desert that God might teach him; next he sat at the

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

feet of Peter in Jerusalem, and perhaps thought that he was now ready to go to work; but not so. In Tarsus, God was still preparing him for the work He had for him to do. When God saw that he was fully prepared for service, He sent Barnabas to bring him to Antioch.

God has a special work for each one of us to do, but we must be trained for it. We do not always understand the training or why we must wait so long; but if, like Paul, we are ready for each thing as it comes, whatever it may be, God will make no mistake in the training, and in His own time He will put us into the work He has for us.

PRAYER.

"Teach me Thy way, O Jehovah; I will walk in Thy truth." PSA. 86:11.

CHAPTER XIII.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Then said I, Lo I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God." HEB. 10:7.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Set apart for service. Acts 13: 1-3.
2. On the island of Cyprus. Acts 13: 4-12.
Saul becomes Paul. 13: 9.
3. Antioch in Pisidia. Acts 13: 14-50.
4. At Iconium. Acts 14: 1-5.
5. At Lystra and Derbe. Acts 14: 6-20.
6. The return trip. Acts 14: 21-28.
7. The Council at Jerusalem. Acts 15:
1-29.

STORY.

The relief committee from Antioch found the Christians in Jerusalem in great need, and the supplies sent were gladly received. After fulfilling their mission, Saul, Barnabas, and

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Titus returned to Antioch, taking with them the young man John Mark.

The number of Christians at Antioch had become so large that the synagogues were overcrowded, and other meeting places had to be found. These must have some distinctive name, and again a new name, or at least a new meaning, came into use. These places of assembly were called churches. Later this came to include the people as well as the building. Thus the Christian Church at Antioch, outside of Jerusalem, outside even of Judea, gave to the world these two names, Christian, and Church, that have been so universally used in the Christian world ever since.

In this Church at Antioch were many strong, earnest Christians. One day as they met for religious worship, one may have said: "I have a feeling that God wants us to do a greater work for Him. We are a strong Church now, and could get along by ourselves; but think of all the people who do not know that Jesus is the Christ; surely they need Saul and Barnabas more than we do."

Another said, "I had the same feeling."

"Let us ask God about it," still another would say.

As they knelt in prayer, a message came from God, saying, "Separate Me Barnabas and

Paul's First Missionary Journey

Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Just what this work was, perhaps no one knew; but it was God's work, and that was enough for Barnabas and Saul.

Preparations were made for the journey, and, taking John Mark with them, they went directly to the seaport of Antioch, Seleucia, and set sail for Cyprus. Making a tour of the island, they came to the capitol, Paphos. Here they were invited by the deputy governor, Sergius Paulus, to preach to him. As they talked, he was led to Christ.

In reading of this incident, for the first time we find the name Paul (which was Saul's Roman or Gentile name) used. Luke says, "Saul, who is also called Paul," and from this time he becomes Paul to every one.

Leaving Paphos, they crossed to the mainland and anchored at Perga in Pamphylia. Here, as in every city, they sought the Jewish quarters, and were gladly received. On the Sabbath day they preached in the synagogue, and were invited to come again the following Sabbath. Their fame went abroad during the week, and when the Sabbath came great crowds, both of Christian Jews and of Gentiles, came out to hear them. The non-Christian Jews could not stand this; a mob was raised, and Barnabas and Paul were driven from the city, but not

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

until many had believed and the foundation for a Christian Church had been laid.

John Mark's courage failed; he was afraid to go further, and returned to Jerusalem; but Paul and Barnabas went on to Iconium. Here many, both Jews and Gentiles, believed; but the city was divided, part following Paul, and part following the Jews. The latter made an attack on the Christians, intending to stone Paul, and again it was necessary for him to flee from the city.

At Lystra a lame man was healed, and the people, thinking that Paul was Mercury, and Barnabas, Jupiter, would have worshiped them if they had not forbidden it. But they were followed by Jews from Antioch, who, not satisfied with driving them from their own cities, excited a mob here. This time they succeeded in their purpose. They stoned Paul, and left him outside the city, supposing him to be dead.

As his friends stood about him, they saw signs of life, and he was soon restored to consciousness. The next day he and Barnabas went to Derbe. They were unmolested here, and, after preaching for a time, they retraced their steps, visiting and completing the organization of the Churches, which, in spite of the persecutions, they had founded in each place.

Paul's First Missionary Journey

When they reached Antioch, every one was anxious to know about their journey, and a great missionary meeting was held, at which the returned missionaries told of their experiences.

The older disciples in Jerusalem still believed that every one must adopt the Jewish faith before he could become a Christian. Some of these came up to the Church at Antioch, and declared that; on this account, some of the members of the Church were not Christians.

Paul and Barnabas went down to Jerusalem with these Jews to have this matter settled. A council was called; the discussion was long and heated; Peter and Paul were on opposite sides, and were very much in earnest.

Paul was so sure that Christ intended all, whether Jew or Gentile, to be saved, that he could not give up. At last his argument prevailed.

The council decided that any one who believed in Christ might be received into the Church, whether he was a Jew or Gentile. This discussion was put into writing, and Judas and Silas were sent with Paul and Barnabas, to read it to the Churches, and for the first time the Christian Church was opened to all who believed in Jesus Christ.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 10. Paul's first missionary journey.

In following Paul in his missionary journeys the outline map may, if desired, be drawn before the study of the lesson, and the names of the places filled in as they are mentioned in the study. The outgoing journey may be indicated by the blue line, and the return by the red line, or by the arrows as in Plan 10.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What miracles led to the conversion of Sergius Paulus?

2. Who asked Paul to preach the next Sabbath at Perga?

3. How many times on his first missionary journey was Paul stoned or threatened with stoning?

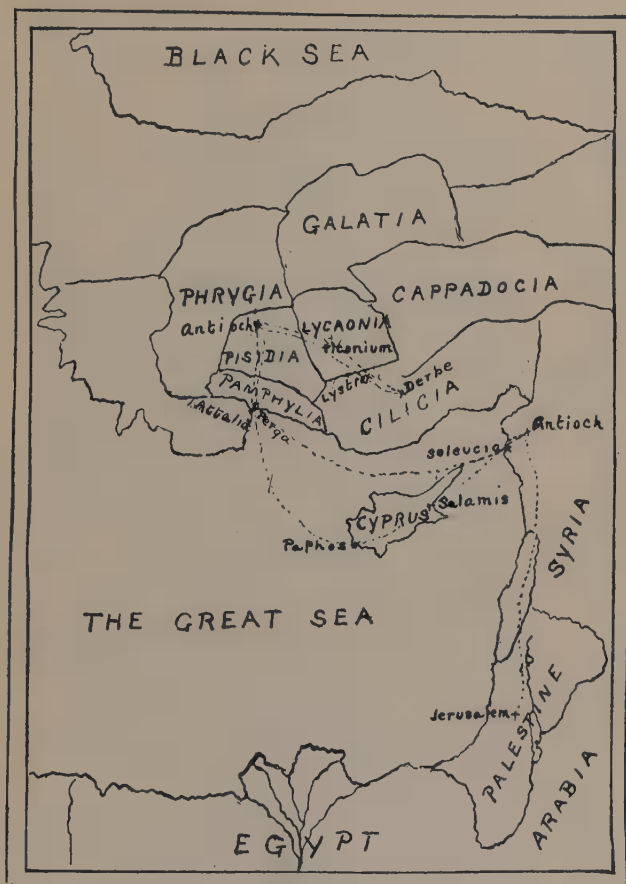
4. At what place was Barnabas called Jupiter, and Paul Mercury?

5. Name the places visited on this journey.

HEART TALK.

A little girl was once asked if she would not be afraid to take a long, lonely walk by herself. "Why, no," she said, "I will be so interested in thinking of helping grandma when I get there, I won't think to be afraid."

Paul's First Missionary Journey



PLAN 10. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

We need never be afraid when we are helping God or doing His service. We may have hard times, or even be in danger, but let us think of those who need our help or of what we can do for them, and we will not think of being afraid.

PRAYER.

"Show Thy marvelous loving-kindness, O Thou that savest by Thy right hand them that take refuge in Thee from those that rise up against them." PSA. 17:7.

CHAPTER XIV.
PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY
JOURNEY.

ANTIOCH TO ATHENS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me." PHIL. 4: 13.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Antioch to Troas. Acts 15: 35, 41;
16: 1-7.
2. Called to Macedonia. Acts 16: 8-11.
3. The first convert in Philippi. Acts 16:
12-15.
4. The arrest. Acts 16: 16-24.
5. The earthquake and release. Acts 16:
24-40.
6. In Thessalonica. Acts 17: 1-9.
7. In Berea and Athens. Acts 17: 10-33.

STORY.

After a short rest in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas decided to revisit the Churches they had founded.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Barnabas proposed that they again take John Mark with them. "No," said Paul; "John deserted us the last time just when we needed him most." Barnabas thought he should have another trial, but Paul would not yield; neither would Barnabas, and they parted company.

Barnabas took John and sailed for Cyprus, taking the same route as before.

Paul invited Silas to be his companion, and they started in the opposite direction, intending to visit Derbe first, and come back by the way of Cyprus.

See them as they start. Going this way, they must travel on foot, or on the backs of donkeys. Of course they must have with them boxes containing their parchment rolls of the Scriptures, cooking utensils, bags containing food, leather bottles of water, oil and wine, and bundles of extra clothing. Then they will need a small tent. All of these they will strap on the backs of donkeys.

They are dressed for a long, hard journey. On their feet are strong sandals, for they will have some rough walking and climbing to do. Their thick walking-sticks and heavy cloaks, which must also serve as blankets, complete their outfit.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Leaving Antioch by the northern gate, their route led them first through Syria, where Paul must stop to encourage the Churches which he had founded during his stay in Tarsus.

Going to the north and then to the west, they would pass through many narrow and dangerous mountain gorges, and swim swollen streams, where no bridges were to be found and the water was too deep for fording. At night the screams of the hyena and the mountain wolf often kept them awake.

Reaching Tarsus they stopped a few days; and then on across the hot, unhealthy plains, and up through the famous Cilician gate in the Taurus mountains. A turbulent stream ran through this pass, and must be crossed and re-crossed. The walls were so high and so steep that in many places the sun never reached the path. At times the walls were so close together that a loaded camel could scarce pass between them. In places a slip or misstep, and one would be dashed to pieces in the rocky stream below.

This pass was the dread of all travelers, and Paul and Silas were not a little glad when the road led out into the sunshine on the high tableland, where they might rest and cook their food.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Descending, they came quickly to Derbe, where they read and explained the letter from the Jerusalem council.

On they went to Lystra, only a day's ride further. Here Paul met Timothy, and from the first he took a strong liking to him. This liking grew daily, as he saw the earnestness and ability of the young man. Before leaving Lystra, Timothy was added to the party, and during the rest of Paul's life he was his close companion, and Paul came to love him and look upon him as his son.

Just a short stop in Iconium, and another in Antioch in Pisidia; the question now was: "Where next?" "On into Bithynia," said Paul; but God spoke to him so plainly saying "No," that the three companions turned their faces westward toward the sea.

It was a long journey, over two hundred miles, but they pushed on, through Mysia, to Troas on the Ægean Sea.

Here Paul made the acquaintance of another lifelong friend and companion to be, Luke, whom he calls "the beloved physician," and who was also his biographer, giving to the Bible the life of Paul, in the book of Acts. Here, too, Paul saw why God had led him as He did, for in the night came the word of command again; this time a vision of a man stand-

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

ing beside his bed with outstretched hands, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

In the morning he told Silas, Timothy, and Luke of the vision, and they agreed with him that God wanted them to carry the Gospel into Europe.

Luke may have been in Macedonia before, and, if so, was probably their guide. As soon as the wind was favorable they embarked in a vessel bound for Philippi, one of the important cities of Macedonia, crossed by the great Roman road, the famous Ignatian road.

Philippi was, however, a military rather than a trading city, and Paul found but few Jews here. Seeking a synagogue in which he might speak, he found that there was none, but the few Jews in the city held their meetings just outside, on the banks of the river.

When the Sabbath came, these missionaries had a strange experience. Going to this place of meeting, instead of finding a crowd of Jews as they expected, they found just a few women, so that the first Christian sermon preached in Europe was preached to women, and the first convert was a woman, Lydia, a seller of purple cloth.

Lydia had a good home, and she invited Paul and his helpers to live there while they staid in Philippi.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

But stranger things were yet to happen. A poor slave girl in the market place heard Paul, believed in his teaching, and followed him. Her masters became enraged, and brought charges against Paul and Silas. Without a trial they were beaten, cast into prison, and made fast in the stocks. But wherever there were hearers to be found, Paul and Silas were ready to preach Jesus, and in this strange place at midnight, with never a word of complaint, these two brave men prayed and sung hymns of praise to God. Can one wonder that the prisoners listened and believed? Then, in the words of the Bible, "Suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were loosed."

The keeper of the prison came running in alarm. It was certain death for him should the prisoners escape, as they surely would, and quite without hope, he was ready to kill himself, when he heard the voice of Paul saying, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here."

Such unselfish love, on the part of one who had been beaten and imprisoned wrongly, was a new religion to the keeper, and he threw himself at Paul's feet, crying, "What must I do to

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

be saved?" Before the morning he and his family had accepted Christ, and gladly did all that they could for the prisoners.

When the magistrates learned that their prisoners were Roman citizens they were frightened, and, after apologizing, begged them to leave Philippi.

As soon as they were able to travel they went to Thessalonica. Here Paul preached and taught both by his words and his life. While here, his friends at Philippi sent him gifts of food, clothing, and money, which were a great help to him.

Many more people came to hear him here than at Philippi, but this brought trouble. The Jews became jealous, and Paul and Silas were hidden to save their lives, and that night escaped from the city and went to Berea.

The Jews here "were more noble than those of Thessalonica," for they studied the Scriptures to prove whether Paul was right or no; but the Jews of Thessalonica followed the missionaries, determined to make trouble.

As soon as this was known, Paul was sent on to Athens, where he was to wait for Silas and Timothy; Luke had remained in Philippi to help the Churches there.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 11. Paul's second missionary journey.

In this lesson the journey of Paul will be traced from Antioch to Athens, coming to the cities of the first journey in the opposite direction. Troas, Philippi, and Thessalonica will furnish very interesting topics for home study. Compare this map with a map of Southern Europe and Western Asia, that the Juniors may get a more correct idea of the location of the country.

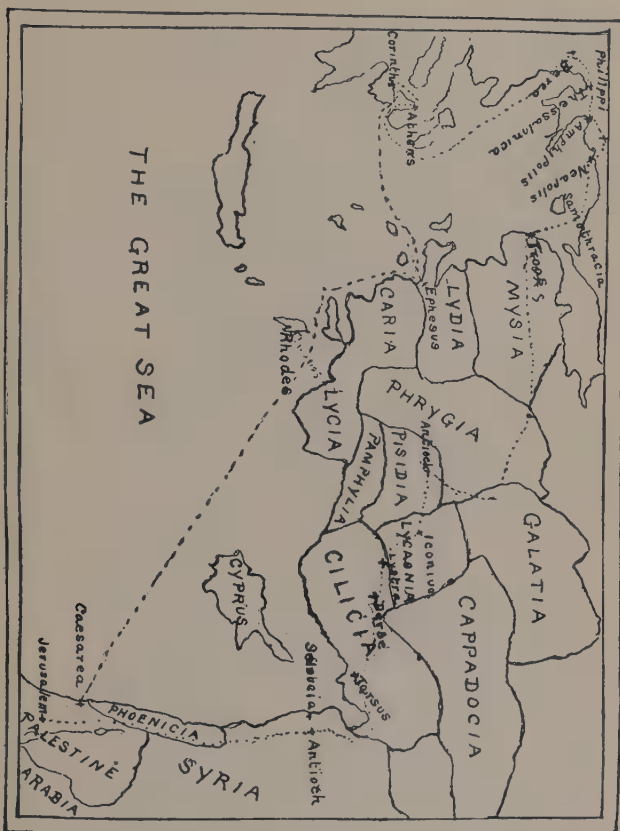
SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Of what nationality were Timothy's parents?
2. What books in the Bible did Luke write?
3. How many cities did Paul visit between Troas and Berea?
4. In what way did the conversion of the slave girl in Philippi cause trouble?
5. Of what advantage was Roman citizenship at this time?

HEART TALK.

Here we find Paul tested by separation from his friend, by a long dangerous journey, by a change of plan, by small audiences, by beating and imprisonment, by loneliness, by success,

Paul's Second Missionary Journey



PLAN II. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

and yet we find him undaunted, faithful, ready to embrace every opportunity to do God's work.

Why? He tells us in his letter to the Philippians. "I can do all things," not because I am strong, or learned, or powerful, but because God is all of these.

We, too, may say with Paul, "I can do anything that God wants me to, through Christ, who gives me the strength."

PRAYER.

"We . . . do not cease to pray . . . for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of His will . . . strengthened with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all patience and long-suffering." COL. 1: 9, 10, 11.

CHAPTER XV.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

ATHENS TO SYRIA.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward." 1 THESS.
5: 16-18.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. At Athens. Acts 17: 15-33.
2. At Corinth. Priscilla and Aquila. Acts 18: 1-4.
3. Timothy sent to Thessalonica. 1 Thess. 3: 1-10; Acts 18: 5.
4. The first letter of Paul. 1 Thess. chapter 1.
5. The second letter of Paul. 2 Thess. chapter 2.
6. Preaching at Corinth. Acts 18: 5-17.
7. Return to Syria. Acts 18: 18-23.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

STORY.

For several weeks Paul was alone in the great city of Athens. He had never seen a city like it, and he was much interested; but he was lonely and not happy. How could he be happy in that great city of idols and idol temples, a city where they did not know God?

He had not come here to preach, but to wait for his companions. Still one may be sure that the first Sabbath found him in the synagogue preaching Christ, and during the week he taught in the market-places or wherever he could get any one to listen to him. Soon this brown-cloaked Jew came to be a familiar figure about the booths and stalls of the business streets.

After several weeks Timothy and Silas came, but their report was discouraging. Silas had come directly from Berea, and said it still was not safe for Paul to return. Timothy had been back to Thessalonica and found that the Christians were being persecuted by the Jews and needed help. Luke was still in Philippi.

After talking over the situation, it was thought best for Paul to remain at Athens for a time, while Timothy returned to Thessalonica. It is not known whether Silas returned to Berea or remained with Paul.

Before he left Athens, Paul was asked to

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

speak before the Stoics and Epicureans, the learned philosophers, in their famous painted porch, called the Areopagus. We are not told that he was able to persuade any of them to believe in Christ, though his sermon that day was one of his masterpieces.

From Athens he went to Corinth; here he remained preaching, teaching, and working at his trade for eighteen months. Here he met Aquila and Priscilla, Jewish Christians from Rome, who were also tent-makers, and with whom probably he entered into partnership.

While in Corinth he was rejoined by Timothy and Silas. They report that the Churches are progressing, but also tell him that the Church at Thessalonica is still being persecuted, and that some are becoming discouraged because Christ had not come back.

Paul could not go to them to help them, but he wrote them two letters. His first letter to the Thessalonians is probably the oldest book in the New Testament; that is, it was written first, and may have been sent from one Church to another for reading.

One can imagine what the writing of that letter must have meant. First, the long scroll of papyrus must be secured and the reed pen. Timothy, thus armed, and with a bottle of liquid soot fastened to his girdle, seats himself

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

and writes the words as Paul dictates them. It is slow work, and it must be done between the hours of working and teaching or preaching. The first letter is really a letter of comfort to the people, and its keynote is hope.

The second letter was written not many months later, while Paul was still in Corinth, because he learned that some people had stopped working, and were idling away their time waiting for the second coming of Christ. Paul reminds them of his own example, and how he worked constantly, even though he, like the other apostles, believed that the time of the coming of Christ was not far distant.

This Church at Thessalonica is one of great interest, for from it, in the third century, two of the earliest missionaries were sent out to the Bohemians and Moravians.

Paul found the Jews of Corinth hard to influence; but he was not discouraged, and continued preaching day after day, and his work was very successful.

From Corinth Paul returns to Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila, stopping for a brief time at Ephesus, and going thence to Cæsarea and Antioch.

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan II will be completed in this lesson, tracing the journey from Athens to Corinth, pausing for a short lecture by the Juniors on each of these cities; thence to Ephesus with another lecture; on past Rhodes, and direct to Cæsarea; thence to Antioch, though, in all probability, Paul visited Jerusalem before going to Antioch.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What two people are mentioned among "those who believed" at Athens?
2. What two are especially mentioned at Corinth?
3. Who was the Roman proconsul who protected Paul in Corinth?
4. In whose names were both letters to the Thessalonians written?
5. What do you think Paul means by 2 Thess. 3: 17?

HEART TALK.

Paul, writing to the Christians of Thessalonica, to comfort them in time of persecution, says to them, "Rejoice always."

This may have seemed a strange message, but Paul knew what he was talking about. He, too, had been persecuted, and he knew, first, that the way to keep up one's courage was to be

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

joyful, no matter what came. Then, too, he knew that this was possible; that God could keep one joyful under any circumstances.

Let us learn to rejoice when things do not go our way, and when everything seems hard to bear, just as much as when everything is pleasant, for "The joy of the Lord is our strength."

PRAYER.

"O satisfy us in the morning with Thy loving kindness, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." PSA. 90: 14.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

FROM ANTIOCH TO EPHESUS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store as he may prosper." 1 COR. 16: 2.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The first stage of the journey. Acts 18: 22, 23.
2. A journey of warning against false teachers. Gal. 1: 6-10.
3. The twofold mission of this journey. Gal. 2: 1-10.
4. The method of carrying out their purpose. 1 Cor. 16: 1-4.
5. Paul's assistants in securing the offerings. Acts 20: 4; 2 Cor. 8: 1-15.
6. Paul's companion. 1 Cor. 4: 17.
7. Apollos. Acts 18: 24-28.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

STORY.

At Antioch Paul learned more definitely of the false teachers whom the Jews were sending out, and who, claiming to be followers of Christ, taught that Paul had been a false teacher, and that no one was a Christian who was not first a Jew.

The Churches everywhere were troubled, and many Christians were being led away. Again Paul starts out to strengthen their faith, and he visits in order the Churches which he had founded throughout Phrygia and Galatia; but he could not pass by the Cilician Churches on the way, without stopping long enough to give new courage to the faithful in each.

His journey had a twofold mission this time. To-day the home Churches take offerings and send to help the work among the heathen nations, but in Paul's day the Gentile or heathen Christians were the ones who had money.

The Church in Judea was in need, and Paul was instructed to arrange for an offering to be taken in each of the Churches which he visited. Every Church was to appoint some one to go with Paul, on his return trip, and carry this money to Jerusalem. His great work, however, was to counteract the influence of the Jewish teachers by preaching Christ.

Just who Paul had for a traveling compan-

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

ion on this trip is not known. It is probable, however, that Silas returned to Jerusalem and that Timothy remained with Paul. Other friends joined them from time to time.

While Paul was in Antioch, Aquila and Priscilla remained in Ephesus. One day a new teacher appeared in Ephesus. He was a very learned man, a Jew from Alexandria, whose name was Apollos. Aquila and Priscilla went to hear him. What was their amazement to find him teaching the words of John the Baptist, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and telling of the Messiah that was to come!

Listening to his burning words, they were convinced that he was sincere. At the close of the sermon they went to him and told him that he had just the beginning, that that Gospel had been fulfilled. He at once became their pupil, and they taught him "Jesus Christ," just as they had learned Him from Paul.

One can imagine the eagerness with which Apollos would listen to this new Gospel, and the great earnestness with which he began to teach and preach Christ.

The Church at Corinth needed help, and just before Paul reached Ephesus, Apollos went to Corinth, and so did not meet Paul until some time later.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

When Paul and Timothy reached Ephesus, they were warmly welcomed by Aquila and Priscilla, with whom Paul probably went into partnership again, and by the Church there.

Some of Paul's companions continued the journey at once, in order to make arrangements for the offerings in the different Churches before Paul arrived.

PENCIL AND CRAYON.

Plan 12. Paul's third missionary journey.

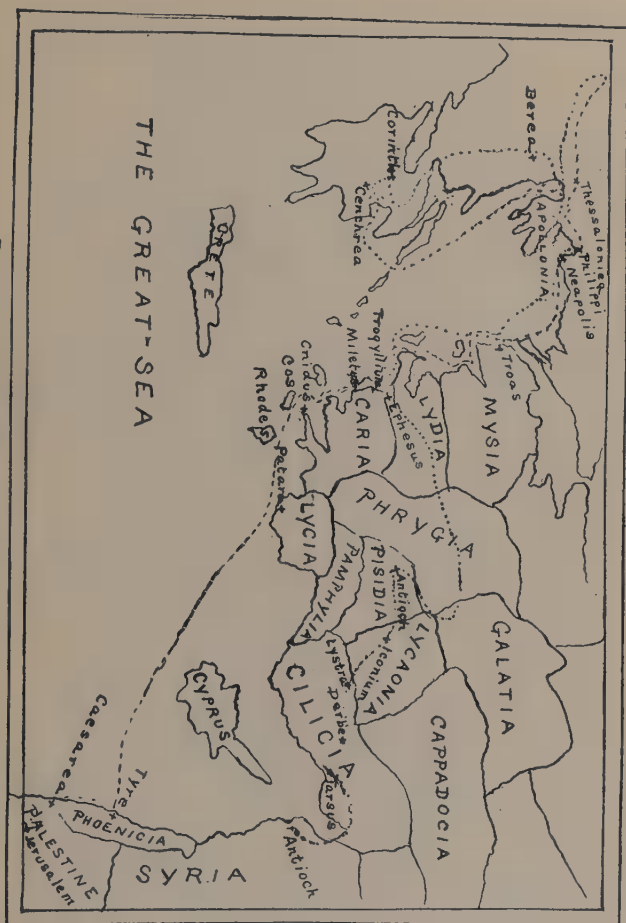
Again Paul takes the overland route, revisiting the Churches at Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia; then up into Galatia, through Phrygia, and down to Ephesus, where he makes his long stay.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What were some of the places Paul would have visited before reaching Ephesus?
2. Which of these Churches would be of special interest to Timothy?
3. In how many of them had Paul been persecuted?
4. Why was Paul going to Ephesus?
5. How long did Paul remain in Ephesus?

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

PLAN 12. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.



Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

HEART TALK.

One of the strongest indications of a true love for Christ is a desire to help some one else and a liberality in giving to those in need.

The generous response to their call for help for the Church in Jerusalem, must have been very gratifying to Paul; but he knew that many people would give if their sympathies were aroused, and that would be the end of it. Or they would intend to give, and then forget all about it, or use all their money for some other purpose; so he gave them a rule for giving, because he knew that unless they were doing something for God there was great danger of their forgetting Him.

We have that rule in our memory verse, and it is one of the rules that is just as good as when Paul gave it. Have you tried it? Do not wait. Begin to-day

PRAYER.

"Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Be their shepherd also, and bear them up forever." PSA. 28:9.

CHAPTER XVII.
PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY
JOURNEY.

EPHESUS TO PHILIPPI.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." 1 COR. 16: 13.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Teaching in Ephesus. Acts 19: 1-8.
2. Teaching in the school of Tyrannus. Acts 19: 9, 10.
3. Proof of apostleship. Acts 19: 11-19. Brief visit to Corinth. 2 Cor. 12: 21; 13: 1. Timothy sent to Macedonia. Acts 19: 21, 22.
4. First letter to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 1: 1-11.
5. Exhortation to unity. 1 Cor. 3: 8, 9.
6. The riot at Ephesus. Acts 19: 23-41.
7. Paul at Troas. 2 Cor. 2: 12.

STORY.

The teaching of Apollos had left an open door for Paul at Ephesus. When he came

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

among the believers, his first question was, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" They did not know what he meant; but when he had preached "Jesus Christ" to them, they gladly believed in Him, and God sent His Holy Spirit upon them as He had upon the disciples at Pentecost.

For three months Paul preached in the synagogue, but the unbelieving Jews tried to turn the people away from his teaching. Then he left the synagogue, and, taking his followers with him, entered the school of Tyrannus, where he taught for two years, and gathered many disciples about him.

Ephesus was a city of idol-worshippers and magicians without number. Something that would break the superstitious faith of the people in these magicians was necessary, and God performed many wonderful miracles by the hands of Paul.

Certain magicians thought that they, too, would drive out evil spirits in the name of Christ, even as Paul did; again God manifested His power in such a way that even the magicians believed. So great was the fame of these miracles that many people brought their books of magic to Paul, who built a bonfire of them in the streets of Ephesus.

Paul probably paid a short visit to Corinth,

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

and later wrote them a letter which has been lost. About this time Paul planned to go into Macedonia, but the interest in his teaching was so widespread he could not leave Ephesus, so he sent Timothy.

Christians coming from Corinth brought bad news of the Church there. The people were forgetting Christ and dividing themselves into parties, some saying that they were followers of Paul, some of Apollos, and some of other leaders. This, of course, was making trouble in the Church. Then, too, Corinth was a very wicked city, and some people who had come into the Church had gone back to their wicked ways, though still holding membership in the Church.

Paul was much distressed. He could not go to them just then, so he wrote a letter, which is known as the First Letter to the Corinthians, and sent it by Titus, bidding him bring back word just how he found things in the Church.

In Ephesus was the great temple of the goddess Diana, and the making and selling of silver and copper images of Diana was a very profitable line of business.

As the influence of Paul increased, the merchants began to fear for their trade, and one named Demetrius went about the city promoting this feeling till he succeeded in raising a riot.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

The mob gathered in the great theater of the city, some not even knowing what they were there for, and all shouting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" until tumult and din filled the city.

Paul would have gone to them, but his friends would not let him, and, finding no new excitement, the fury of the mob finally died down, and they were dispersed by the town clerk; however, it was not thought safe for Paul to stay longer in the city, so he went to Troas, where he was to meet Titus, with the news from Corinth.

These were trying days for Paul. In writing of them later, he said, "I had no relief in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother." Titus was delayed; Paul was sick and depressed, but he says, "A door was opened unto me," and he was eager as ever to enter. He founded a Church here, which he was unable to do on his former visit, and then went on into Macedonia, landing at Necropolis and going at once to Philippi, where his heart was rejoiced by the warm welcome of the Church, which had always been true to him. He was further relieved by the coming of Titus with good news from the Church in Corinth.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 12 will be continued in this lesson. Unless the places are first located on the map, as in previous plan, there may be difficulty in following the route of Paul. Let the line indicating the journey be drawn from point to point as the story develops. Starting from Ephesus he goes north to Troas; thence to Necropolis, and on to Philippi.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How many people were in the company on whom the Holy Spirit descended at Ephesus?
2. What were some of the miracles worked by Paul at Ephesus?
3. What other apostle performed similar miracles?
4. To what great city does Paul speak of going?
5. Who were with Paul at Ephesus?

HEART TALK.

People may be very good, they may do the best they know how, but unless they belong to Christ and have His Spirit in their hearts, the most important thing is lacking. The people at Ephesus who responded to the preaching of Apollos did not know there was anything bet-

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

ter, but we have no such excuse to-day. The man or woman, boy or girl, who says, "I can be just as good without belonging to Christ," is making a great mistake. The person who tells you that any other religion except the religion of Jesus Christ, which gives you the Holy Spirit to guide and direct you, will do, is wrong; for nothing but God's Spirit can enable us to stand fast and be strong. Watch, and keep close to Him.

PRAYER.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, . . . that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that you may be strengthened with power through His Spirit."
EPH. 3: 14-16.

CHAPTER XVIII.
PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY
JOURNEY.
PHILIPPI TO JERUSALEM.

MEMORY VERSE.

"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." ROM. 8: 16, 17.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The arrival of Titus. 2 Cor. 7: 6, 7.
2. Second Epistle to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. chapter 13.
3. Mission of Titus. 2 Cor. 8: 22-24; 9: 1-12.
4. Corinth. Acts 20: 1-3.
5. Letter to the Galatians. Gal. 1: 6-10; 3: 1-9.
6. Phœbe. Rom. 16: 1, 2.
7. Letter to the Romans. Rom. 1: 1-8.
- Return Journey. Acts 20: 3-38.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

STORY.

Paul was greatly relieved by the report of Titus, even though there was a small party in the Church at Corinth who were bitterly opposing him.

He directed Titus to return at once in order that he might take charge of the offering to be sent to Jerusalem. He wrote and sent by him the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. This letter was full of love and encouragement to those who had listened to his former letter and obeyed it, but very severe and full of warnings toward those who were opposing him.

Leaving Philippi, Paul travels through Macedonia, preaching and bringing before the Churches the need of the Church in Judea, holding before them the love of Christ as their motive for giving. Probably he visited the Churches of Thessalonica and Berea, thence traveling South, and reaching Corinth in the early winter.

Here the false teachers from among the Jews were again gaining a strong influence over the Christians, and he felt that severe measures must be used to hold the Church true to Christ. That he was very successful in overthrowing these teachers and their influence, we learn from writers outside the Bible.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

While in Corinth he met with another disappointment. Word came that these same teachers were disturbing the Churches in Galatia, and leading them away from his teaching.

It was nearly time for him to go back to Jerusalem. He could not visit them, but wrote the Epistle to the Galatians, which was to be read in all the Churches. This letter shows a feeling of sadness and pained surprise, for the Galatian Christians were very largely Gentiles, and he had not expected them to be influenced by the Jews. He tries in his Epistle to prove to them that these Jews would destroy the very foundations of Christianity, and also contradicts certain falsehoods that have been told about himself.

Learning that Phœbe, one of the Corinthian converts, was about to go to Rome, Paul took the opportunity of sending a letter by her to the Christians in Rome. This is Paul's introduction to the Church at Rome. In it we become acquainted with Paul, with his religious thinking, his beliefs, and his spiritual life. It sums up all of the writings of all his other books. It is the greatest of all his letters.

Paul had intended to go directly to Syria as soon as the spring opened; but a plot to take his life was discovered, and he turns back into Macedonia. Those who had aided him in col-

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

lecting the offerings from the Churches went to Troas, where they waited for Paul and Luke.

The trip through Macedonia was a rapid one, but he could hardly have passed by the Churches, which he never hoped to see again, without a short stay to encourage them and strengthen their faith.

He spent the Passover with his beloved Philippians, and did not leave Philippi till the Passover week was ended. Paul had planned to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and no time was to be lost.

Unfavorable winds delayed them, but after five days the port was gained. Reaching Troas, they tarried here seven days, holding, on the last night, an all-night meeting, marked by the falling of the young man from the window and his restoration to life.

Sailing from Assos, where Paul joined his companions, they find favoring winds, and come to Miletus. As the ship must stop several days here, Paul sends for the elders of the Church at Ephesus, and has a farewell service with them. The Holy Spirit had made known to Paul that the end of his work was approaching, and that this might be the last service with these dear friends. We are told that they went with him to his ship, where they wept as they

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

bade him farewell, "sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more."

At Patara a change is made to a vessel sailing for Phœnicia. A stop of seven days is made in Tyre; then on past Ptolemais to Cæsarea, where they are entertained in the home of Philip the Evangelist and his four daughters, who are prophetesses.

While here Paul is warned that bonds and imprisonment await him in Jerusalem, and he is urged not to go. But he feels that God has something for him to do there; so, arranging about his baggage, he pushes on.

Reaching Jerusalem he was warmly welcomed by the disciples, who listened eagerly to all he had to tell them of his work among the Gentiles.

After hearing this story they warned him of danger. They told him of the falsehood that had been spread among the believing Jews: that Paul had forsaken the Jewish faith, and urged him to publicly conform to one of their customs that the accusation might be disproved. This Paul gladly did, for he had never left the faith of his fathers, though he knew that, despite these things, bonds and imprisonment awaited him.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

The suggestions given in the previous lessons will be followed out in completing Plan 12.

Leaving Philippi, Paul probably passes through Thessalonica, Berea, and south to Corinth. Leaving Corinth by water he goes back to Macedonia, where he makes a rapid trip, and thence to Philippi. Sailing from here he touches at Troas, Assos, Miletus, Patara, Tyre, on past Ptolemais to Cæsarea, and thence to Jerusalem.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Why was Titus sent back to Corinth the first time? The second?
2. How many trips did Paul make into Macedonia on this journey?
3. How long a time did Paul spend in Macedonia?
4. Where do we find out anything about this part of the trip?
5. To whom was II Corinthians written besides the Church at Corinth?

HEART TALK.

It must have been very hard for these early Christians, before the New Testament was written, to know which teachers were right. When Paul was with them they believed in the

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

gospel which he preached; but when he was gone, and the false teachers told them that Paul was a deceiver, they hardly knew whom to believe.

Paul told them of a way to prove this. He said God's Spirit in their hearts would bear witness with their spirits. He could not tell them just how this would be done, but he said they would know in their hearts that they were God's children.

This is true now. We do not have to be uncertain about it. If we are God's children, God's Spirit in our hearts makes us perfectly sure of it.

PRAYER.

*"Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name."* MATT. 6: 9.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT.

MEMORY VERSE.

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." ROM. 8: 38, 39.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. A plan to conciliate the Jews. Acts 21: 20-26.
2. Mobbed in the temple, and rescued by the chief captain. Acts 21: 27-40.
3. Paul's defense. Acts 22: 1-21.
4. Saved by his Roman citizenship. Acts 22: 22-29.
5. Sent to Cæsarea. Acts 23: 12-35.
6. Imprisonment in Cæsarea. Acts, chap. 24.
7. Trial before Festus; appeal to Cæsar. Acts 25: 1-12.

Paul's Imprisonment

STORY.

"Thou teachest all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses," was the claim made against Paul by the thousands of Jews in Jerusalem.

To disarm this prejudice the apostles suggested that Paul conform to an ancient and well-known custom of Moses, and pay the expenses of four young men who had taken a vow. This would bring him into public notice, not in opposition to, but in the observance of the Mosaic custom.

But the disciples had not realized the depth of the hatred against Paul. While in the act of performing this service in the temple, he was seized, dragged outside the court, and the great gates closed that the sacred inclosure might not be polluted. He would undoubtedly have been killed in a few moments, but word reached the chief captain of the Roman guard, and immediately from the Tower of Antonio, close at hand, marched a company of soldiers. The chief captain himself seized Paul and commanded him to be bound.

So great was the fury of the mob that the soldiers were obliged to lift and carry him to keep him out of its hands. As they reached the steps of the tower of the prison, Paul asked to be allowed to speak. Something in his man-

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

ner silenced the crowd, and they listened silently as he reviewed his life until he came to the point where he said that God said to him, "Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." Then the tumult rose again, and they would have seized him, but the chief captain commanded that he be taken into the prison. When this officer learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, he treated him with the utmost kindness.

Paul's first trial was before the Sanhedrin; a second hearing was called for, but Paul's nephew learned that the object of this was that they might seize and kill him between the tower and the council hall.

He went at once to Paul with the information, and Paul sent him to the chief captain. The case was serious, and that night the chief captain sent him secretly to Cæsarea, to Felix the governor.

For two years Felix put off rendering a decision, and during all this time Paul was kept a prisoner. At the end of two years Felix was succeeded by Festus; but thinking to gain the good will of the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

Soon after his appointment Festus visited Jerusalem, and the Jews asked as a favor to have Paul brought to Jerusalem and tried there, thinking to kill him before he reached Jerusa-

Paul's Imprisonment

lem. Whether Festus suspected their plot or not, is not known, but he outwitted them by fixing the place of the trial in Cæsarea.

The trial was called; but Paul was tired of waiting for a verdict, and, thinking that Festus was going to follow the plan of Felix, he appealed to Cæsar. This took the matter entirely out of the power of Festus. The right of appeal to Cæsar was one of the great privileges of a Roman citizen.

Paul, however, had probably misjudged Festus, who was a very different type of man from Felix. Festus commanded that Paul be returned to the prison while arrangements were being made to send him to Rome. Before these arrangements were completed, King Agrippa visited Cæsarea, and Festus told him about his prisoner, and that there was really no charge to be made against Paul that would justify him in sending him to Cæsar. He was puzzled about the matter, and asked Agrippa to examine Paul himself.

Paul is brought before Agrippa and Festus. He again reviews the events of his life, and tells of his special call to the work of preaching Christ to the Gentiles.

Agrippa was much impressed with Paul's message, and when they had withdrawn he said to Festus: "This man doeth nothing worthy of

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

death or bonds. He might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar."

Was Paul sorry that he had made his appeal to Cæsar? He would not have done so had he not felt that it was God's plan for him. One night, in the prison back in Jerusalem, God had come to him in a dream and said to him, "Be of good cheer, for as thou has testified concerning Me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome," and Paul felt that the appeal to Cæsar was God's plan for sending him to the great capital, which he had long wished to visit.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

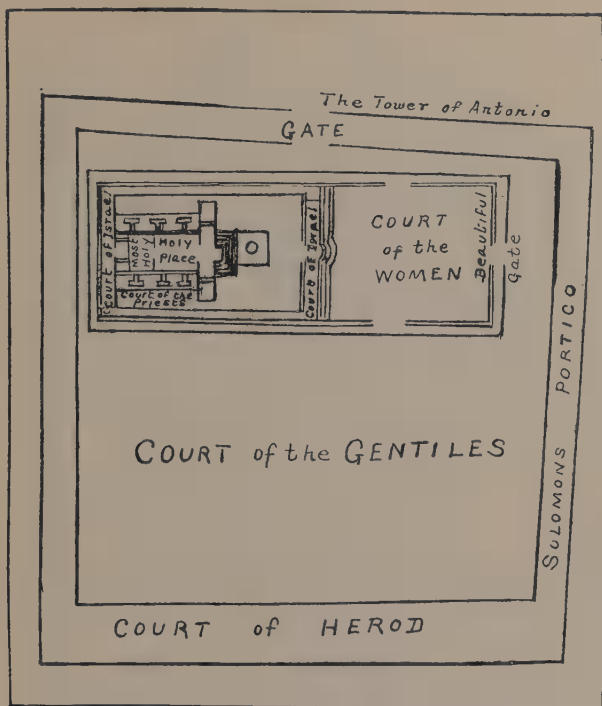
Plan 13. The Arrest and Imprisonment of Paul.

Again we come to the plan of the temple. The Tower of Antonio, the steps from which Paul made his address, and the council chamber of the Sanhedrin, are the places of special interest in Plan 13.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What was the accusation of the Jews against Paul?
2. Before how many people was he tried?
3. In how many places was he imprisoned?
4. How many plots were formed to kill him?

Paul's Imprisonment



PLAN 13. THE ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT OF PAUL.

5. What did Agrippa say after hearing him?

HEART TALK.

Paul's faith must have been sorely tested. He had obeyed God, and yet for that obedience his life was in danger. Even harder than the

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

danger was the monotony of the imprisonment year after year, but through it all his courage does not waver or his faith falter.

God's message to him was, "Be of good courage," and he knows, whatever trial comes, God is with him.

The trials that come to us, though very different from Paul's, are just as hard to bear; but God says, "Be of good courage." There is no trial small enough or great enough to separate us from God.

PRAYER.

"Give ear to my prayer. . . . Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence." PSA. 17: 1, 2.

CHAPTER XX.

A NOTABLE VOYAGE.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." EPH. 6: 10.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The voyage begun. Acts 27: 1-6.
2. Contrary winds. Acts 27: 7, 8.
3. Paul's advice. Acts 27: 9-11.
4. Preparing for the storm. Acts 27: 11-17.
5. Paul's review of his dangers. 2 Cor. 11: 24-27.
6. Paul's estimate of his trials. Phil. 1: 12, 13.
7. Paul's confidence in God. 2 Tim. 1: 12-17.

STORY.

The voyage from Cæsarea to Rome was not easily made in the days of Paul. Passenger vessels were unknown; but had an onlooker

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

been at the wharf in Cæsarea one morning of the late summer, A. D. 60, he might have seen a company of guards escorting several prisoners to a trading vessel bound for Adramyttium in Asia Minor.

Each soldier was chained by the wrist to his especial guard, whose life was pledged to the safe conduct of that prisoner, until he had delivered him in Rome.

Among the prisoners on this morning is the brown-robed Jew, who has been seen in Cæsarea many times before. With him is Aristarchus, a fellow Christian from Thessalonica, who probably is also chained to a guard. Luke, too, the beloved physician, is with Paul in his hour of need. In order that the prisoners may be doubly guarded, they are accompanied by the centurion, Julius, who is in charge of the company.

Sailing from Cæsarea, they touch the next day at Sidon. Julius shows his kindly feeling for Paul, by allowing him to visit his friends while the vessel is anchored here.

Leaving Sidon, the winds proved contrary, and, instead of taking the direct route south of the island of Cyprus, they were obliged to take the northern route, along the coast of Pamphylia and Cilicia, following the same course

A Notable Voyage

that Paul had gone over on his first journey with Barnabas, and on the return voyage of his third journey.

Landing at Myra, the centurion was fortunate in finding, as had been anticipated, a vessel, probably a corn-ship from Alexandria, bound for Italy. Passage was easily secured for the prisoners and their companions.

Unfavorable winds attended them from the time they sailed from Myra; after many days they reached Cnidus, and, the winds still being contrary, they decided to veer from the usual route, and take advantage of the shelter furnished by the island of Crete. This proved an unwise decision; still, after many difficulties, they were able to make the harbor of Fair Havens. Here they were delayed for some time, and before they were ready to sail it was the last of September or the first of October; the season of storms was at hand, when it was considered unwise to venture into the open sea.

Paul advised them to winter at Fair Havens, and continue the voyage in the early spring. He warned them that they would meet with great losses if they went on. But Paul was only a prisoner, and the owner of the vessel did not like the idea of losing so much time; then, too, the harbor was not a very good one

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

in which to winter; the majority, who were in favor of going on, ruled the day.

With the first favoring wind they sailed, hoping to reach Phœnix before the winter storms really set in.

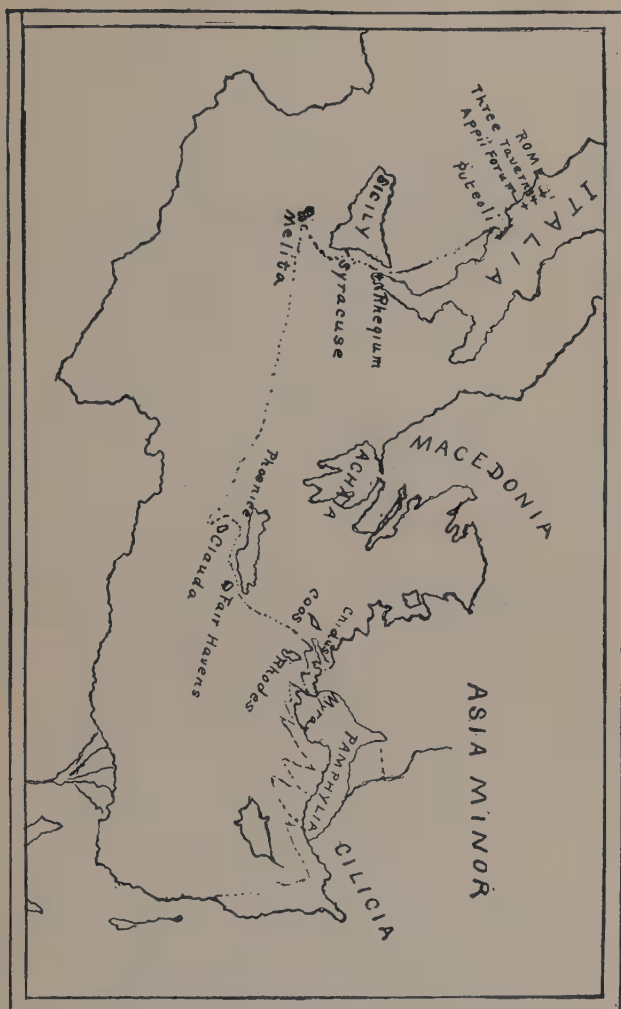
Rounding Cape Matala, Phœnix was but thirty-five miles distant. Hugging the coast of Crete, they expected to reach the harbor before another day passed, but the favoring gale was deceptive. The wind suddenly veered to the north, and, with the fury of a hurricane, struck the vessel, driving it from its course.

Driven near the island of Cauda, they were somewhat sheltered for a short time. The captain took advantage of this to hoist the lifeboat on board. This would not be an easy matter, for in such a storm the boat would already be full of water; but with difficulty it was accomplished.

While this was being done, others of the crew were undergirding the vessel; that is, passing ropes round it and securing these firmly on deck. This was done, lest, in the tossing of the waves, the framework of the vessel should spring, and cause a leak.

Still others lowered the gearing. Everything was now in the best possible shape for weathering a long storm, but the danger was great. The season of severest tempests was

A Notable Voyage



PLAN 14. THE VOYAGE TO ROME.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

upon them, and the ships of those days were not so built, as to be able to withstand heavy storms.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 14. The voyage to Rome.

The Bible Picture, as well as the Story, mark the route of this notable voyage of Paul so carefully that it will be easily followed. Chapter 20 carries the vessel as far as the island of Cauda.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Where is Aristarchus first mentioned?
2. Trace the journey of Paul from Cæsarea to Myra.
3. Trace the journey from Malta to Rome.
4. How may one know at what time of year the vessel was ready to leave Fair Havens?
5. What was Paul's warning?

HEART TALK.

Paul might well be discouraged. After his two years imprisonment in Cæsarea, when liberty seemed almost in sight, this new danger arose. Had God forgotten him? Was this the way Paul felt? No, indeed; for he says, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content," and that while "To live is Christ, to die is great gain."

A Notable Voyage

Is it not worth while to live so close to Christ that we know that whatever comes it is all right, and to know this so surely that we need not worry or be anxious about anything?

PRAYER.

"Withhold not Thy tender mercies from me, O Jehovah. Let Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth continually preserve me, for innumerable evils have compassed me about." PSA. 40: 11, 12.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SHIPWRECK.

MEMORY VERSE.

"And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose."
ROM. 8:28.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. The increasing storm. Acts 27:18-20.
2. Paul's message. Acts 27:21-26.
3. Paul's encouragement. Acts 27:27-38.
4. The shipwreck. Acts 27:39-41.
5. The escape. Acts 27:41-44.
6. Another shipwreck. Jonah 1:1-16.
7. God's care for His messenger. Jonah, chapter 2.

STORY.

The violence of the storm continued, and on the day after leaving Cauda, they lightened the ship by throwing overboard the freight. The third day the danger increased, and to make her still lighter, the tackling was thrown over-

The Shipwreck

board. This would indicate that the undergirding had not been successful, and that the ship had sprung a leak.

The gale continued day after day. The exceeding darkness of the night was followed by the dull gloom of the day. Neither sun, moon, nor stars appeared, which meant that no observations could be taken, and it was as though the boat was utterly lost in the midst of a great sea. At any moment she might be driven on a rock and dashed to pieces. Anxiety gave place to fear, which soon became terror, and all hope of being saved was given up.

What of Paul and his companions? It can readily be understood that they had taken an active part in everything that was being done to increase the safety of the vessel, for they well knew the danger; but this was not all. They alone realized that they were not dependent on human help for safety.

When hope left the sailors, Paul gathered them about him. He reminded them of his advice to them in Fair Havens, and gave them a message direct from God who had said to him, "Fear not, Paul: thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee."

For a time courage revived; but the gale continued night and day for fourteen days.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

On the fourteenth night a new sound was heard. Terror greater than ever reigned. A quick command to "heave the lead" was given. "Twenty fathoms," was the report.

All waited breathless till a second command was given. "Fifteen fathoms," was the result. The boat was being driven ashore. It could but be dashed in pieces.

All was now terror and confusion. Orders were immediately given to clear the anchors. If anchored from the bow, as was the custom, the wind would swing the boat round, and the rock might be close at hand; so four anchors were dropped from the stern, and the head-long course was checked for a time; but at any moment the boat might part from the anchors and go ashore.

Could she hold together till daylight? The sailors thought not, and, under the pretense of looking after the anchors, they lowered the boat, intending to take to it.

Paul saw their plan. He knew there would not be enough left on board to manage the ship, and that probably all would be lost. Quietly he spoke to the centurion: with the short sword which he wore, he quickly cut the ropes and the boat drifted off into darkness.

Day dawns; Paul now seems to have taken at least partial command. The danger is great;

The Shipwreck

hard work is before them, and he urges every one to eat, that he may be better prepared to endure hardness.

As daylight advanced, there seemed a possibility of running the boat into an inlet. If they were to succeed in this, the boat must be made as light as possible, and soon all hands were at work throwing the grain overboard.

Simultaneously the rudders were loosed, the foresail hoisted, and the anchors cut away. The waves, however, were too strong to make the use of the rudders very effective, and instead of gaining the inlet, the bow of the boat was driven upon the rocks and remained fast, while the stern began to go to pieces; but even in this moment of danger the soldiers, whose lives were answerable for the lives of their prisoners, feared lest they might escape, and proposed to kill them.

The centurion, however, because of his interest in Paul, interfered, and thus again Paul was the means of saving life.

Those who could swim now cast themselves into the sea; others made themselves fast to planks, and all came in safety through the breakers to land.

They learned that they were on the island of Melita, inhabited by a people who were called barbarians.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

The shipwrecked people, numbering two hundred seventy six, were kindly cared for, and they remained here until early spring.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 14 will be completed, continuing the voyage from the island of Cauda to the island of Melita.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. Where do we find the reason for the soldiers wishing to kill Paul?
2. When was Paul again at Crete?
3. Find how many times God or His angel stood beside Paul to encourage him.
4. What indication is there that food was scarce?
5. At what other time was Paul taken for one of the gods?

HEART TALK.

Paul, a prisoner, won first the kindly interest, and then the respect, of his Roman guard. Next he showed himself a man to whom the sailors and captain of the vessel could look up. His advice invariably proved wise.

Wherein lay his power? He was strong in the Lord. Every one admires strength, and the strength that comes from God calls forth respect as well as admiration.

The Shipwreck

This strength is for you, if you will use it. Try it. See what it means to "be strong in the Lord."

PRAYER.

"I will give thanks unto Thy name, O Jehovah, for it is good. For He hath delivered me out of all trouble." PSA. 54:6, 7.

CHAPTER XXII.

ROME.

MEMORY VERSE.

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." ROM. 8: 37.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Paul's work in Melita. Acts 28: 1-10.
2. On to Rome. Acts 28: 11-15.
3. Paul at home in Rome. Acts 28: 16.
4. Paul's interview with the Jews. Acts 28: 17-22.
5. A great meeting. Acts 28: 23, 24.
6. Paul's final words to the disbelievers at home. Acts 28: 25-28.
7. Paul's residence in Rome. Acts 28: 30, 31.

STORY.

The half-frozen, weary people gladly welcomed the fires which the people of Melita kindled on the shores; but with so many people to warm, it would require many fires, and Paul with others helped. As he came with a bundle

Rome

of sticks, an adder sprang from it, and fastened upon his hand. The superstitious barbarians at once thought they were harboring a criminal, and that the shipwreck was a sign that the gods were angry with Paul.

Paul, however, simply shook the adder into the fire, and, though they watched anxiously to see him die, he was not hurt. With wonderful rapidity the feeling of the people changed, and they would now have worshiped him as a god had he not restrained them.

It was necessary to remain at Melita until spring, and one can readily imagine that Paul would not be idle. He not only preached Jesus the Christ to these ignorant people, but performed many miracles of healing, and thus won the hearts of all.

After a stay of three months traveling was again safe, and as they set sail in another Alexandrian vessel named the "Twin Brothers," the people of the island supplied them with everything that was needful for their journey.

Landing at Syracuse, they tarried three days, and tradition says Paul founded a Church there. Thence they sailed to Rhegium, and two days later came to Puteoli, the port of Rome. Here Paul found friends, and at their invitation, Julius consented to his spending seven days with them.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

Again they take up their journey; but the news of their arrival at Puteoli has preceded them, and friends from Rome have started out to meet them.

Great was the surprise and joy of Paul, when they reached the market of Appius, to see, among the crowd, friends with whom he had worked in the East.

About ten miles further, at a place called Three Taverns, he was met by a second welcoming party, among whom he probably found his old friends, Aquila and Priscilla. The sympathy and love of these friends brought renewed strength and courage to the wearied apostle. Luke says, "When Paul saw the brethren, he thanked God and took courage."

At last, after so many years of expectant desire to be there, Paul was in Rome. A prisoner? Yes, but not forced to inactivity as at Cæsarea. He, while still chained to his guard, was allowed to live in his own house, which was large enough to accommodate the audiences who came to hear him, and was allowed free intercourse with his friends.

He soon learned that the Roman Jews had already become prejudiced against him. After three days he called the leaders together, to explain to them that he had not been disloyal to

Rome

the Jewish rulers in making his appeal to Cæsar, but rather that the Jews forced him to it. His defense in a measure satisfied them; but they wished to know more of his doctrines and teachings, and arrangements were made for a great meeting where they might hear him further.

They came in crowds to this service. He preached Jesus Christ as he always did; many and long were the discussions that followed, but the final outcome was separation between him and his Gentile followers, and the Jewish Christians.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. When did Paul first plan to go to Rome?
2. How did the Christians in Rome know anything about Paul?
3. Why were the Roman Jews prejudiced against Paul?
4. From what books does Paul quote in his address to the gathering of both Jews and Christians?
5. How do we know that Paul, though a prisoner, had great freedom in Rome?

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Complete Plan 14, from Melita, past Rhegium to Puteoli, and on to Rome.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

HEART TALK.

What a tower of strength it must be to a person to be able to say as did Paul, "I had done nothing" that I should be made a prisoner.

When trouble of any kind comes, our strength lies in the consciousness that we have done no wrong, but such a consciousness comes only by each day living so close to God that our lives shall always be for the right; that in all things we shall be conquerors through Christ.

PRAYER.

"Unto Thee, O Jehovah, do I lift up my soul. O my God, in Thee have I trusted: let me not be put to shame, let not mine enemies triumph over me." PSA. 25: 1, 2.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LETTERS FROM ROME.

MEMORY VERSE.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." PHIL. 4: 8.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. A converted slave. Philemon.
2. The bearer of the letter. Col. 1: 3-8.
3. A message to the Colossians. Col. 2: 1-8; 16-19.
4. An exhortation to the Ephesians. Eph. 5: 1, 2; 6: 10-20.
5. Epaphroditus. Phil. 2: 25-30.
6. A letter to the Philippians. Phil. 1: 1-11.
7. Paul's "Thank you." Phil. 4: 10-20.

STORY.

It was probably at least two or three years after Paul's arrival in Rome before he was

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

brought to trial, and possibly much longer, though there are indications that this trial occurred in A. D. 63.

Among those whom he gathered about him during this time we find Luke, who came with him; Timothy, whom he calls his beloved son; Aristarchus, a fellow prisoner; Demas, Mark, and others.

Among the Roman converts was a runaway slave, Onesimus. His master, Philemon, was a member of the Church in Colossæ, but had been in Ephesus while Paul was there. Onesimus was not only a runaway, but a thief as well. How he was led into Paul's meetings is not known, but having become a follower of Christ, he could not rest till he had confessed his sin. He went to Paul, and told him how he had wronged his master. There was something in the man which made Paul feel that he would be an efficient worker for Christ, and he wished to keep him in Rome, but he must first make things right with his master, Philemon.

Tychicus was about to start for Colossæ on other business for Paul, and he decides to send Onesimus with him; he himself probably supplies the money with which to repay what the slave had stolen, and he sends with him a letter to Philemon, in which he intimates his wish that

Letter from Rome

Onesimus may become a fellow-worker with him for Christ.

Tychicus carried with him another letter also, which is known as the letter to the Colossians. The first real heresy was creeping into the Church at Colossæ, and Paul writes to warn them against the danger.

One going from Rome to Asia Minor would be well laden with messages. Tychicus would probably visit a number of the Churches which Paul had founded. These Churches were in the same danger as the Church at Colossæ, and Paul decided to send by Tychicus a third letter which he might read in the Churches which he visited. This letter is called the Letter to the Ephesians, though it was not written to the Church at Ephesus alone. It repeats the doctrine which Paul had taught, and closes with an exhortation to the Christians to be faithful to Christ and His teachings.

Paul was still a prisoner, chained night and day to his Roman guard; about a year had passed since his arrival at Rome, when Tychicus was sent on his mission to carry Paul's letters to the Churches. Soon afterward the prison home of Paul was cheered by the arrival of Epaphroditus, one of the leading members of the Church at Philippi.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

This Church was one of the bright spots in Paul's life, and one in which he rejoiced, not alone because of the continued thought and kindness of its members for him, but also on account of their great faith and obedience.

Epaphroditus, who was very ill on his arrival in Rome, remained till he was fully recovered, which probably was several months. During this time the Church of Rome was greatly enlarged, and Paul's influence extended. This, of course, attracted more attention to him, and there was a growing feeling of uncertainty among his followers as to his release.

When Epaphroditus recovered, he gladly became Paul's messenger to the Church at Philippi, carrying with him the letter to the Philippians, which has been called Paul's love-letter. It is full of commendation, sympathy, and the warmest feeling. There is no doctrinal treatise in this epistle. It is a real letter, in which he tells his friends of his own life, and the Church in Rome, and expresses his loving interest in them and their constancy and loyalty to Christ.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

It will be interesting to turn to Plan 12 and locate the Churches to whom these epistles are sent, and find how many times Paul had visited each.

Letter from Rome

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. How is it known that Tychicus carried the letter to the Ephesians?
2. In how many of these epistles does Paul wish that he might send Timothy to them?
3. How is it known that Timothy was with Paul at this time?
4. How does Paul speak of the slave Onesimus in his letter to the Colossians?
5. Who were with Paul when he wrote to Philemon?

HEART TALK.

In our memory verse to-day we have one of the strongest fortifications against wrong doing. If our thoughts are centered on the good, the beautiful, and the pure, we need not be afraid of our actions.

Let us remember three things. First, while we can not prevent wrong thoughts coming into our minds, we can prevent their staying there. Second, we are responsible for the kind of thoughts we have. Third, the surest way to get rid of temptation is to think as Paul says of the things he has enumerated in his message to the Philippians.

PRAYER.

"Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts: so shall I meditate on Thy wondrous works." PSA. 119: 27.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PAUL'S LAST YEARS.

MEMORY VERSE.

"I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 TIM. 1: 12.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Scripture lights on Paul's last years. Rom. 15: 24-28; 1 Tim. 1: 3; 2 Tim. 4: 20; Titus 3: 12.
2. First letter to Timothy. 1 Tim. 4: 6-16.
3. Letter to Titus. Titus 3: 1-11.
4. Paul joined by Titus. Titus 3: 12.
5. Deserted by friends. 2 Tim. 1: 15; 4: 10.
6. The faithfulness of Onesiphorus and Luke. 2 Tim. 1: 16; 2 Tim. 4: 11.
7. Second letter to Timothy. 2 Tim. 1: 1-14.

Paul's Last Years

STORY.

The history of Paul is ended. For the rest, one must depend on tradition and on inferences drawn from the epistles and the early writers.

Luke says that he remained a prisoner in Rome for two years, or until A. D. 63. There is strong evidence that he was beheaded in Rome, A. D. 68.

The supposition is that, after his trial in A. D. 63, he was released and went at once to Macedonia, where he had felt that the Churches greatly needed him. Having visited the Churches in Macedonia, tradition says he went to Spain, where he spent two years; but of this there is no direct evidence.

Again traveling eastward, he came to Ephesus. Having spent some time here, he established Timothy in charge of the Church, expecting to return shortly. Going on into Macedonia, he found he would be detained, and, realizing that so young a man as Timothy might meet with difficulties in managing so large a Church, he wrote his first letter to Timothy, in which he laid down rules for the governing of the Church. He also gave him personal advice, besides denouncing the false teaching that had crept into the Church.

From Macedonia, Paul went into Crete. Here he established Titus in a position similar

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

to that held by Timothy at Ephesus. A letter of instruction, somewhat similar to the one sent to Timothy, was sent to Titus, apparently just as Paul was leaving Ephesus, to which place he had returned, for Rome.

Reaching Necropolis, he was obliged to spend the winter, and, from the letter to Titus, it appears that he planned that Titus should join him here.

In the late winter or early spring we find Paul again a prisoner in Rome; but this time there is no hired house of his own. As a criminal, he is chained to his guard and thrown into the common prison or dungeon.

That his imprisonment was not of long duration seems probable. Many of his friends seem to have left him, and, indeed, conditions were such that they could not visit him without danger of like imprisonment. Luke, however, was faithful, and was a great comfort.

Timothy was still in Asia Minor, and how greatly Paul missed him and longed for him may be seen from his second letter to him. Paul begged him to come with all speed to Rome; but feeling the great uncertainty of his reaching him in time, he writes to him his last message, impressing upon him the duties of his office, and urging him to all boldness in the

Paul's Last Years

cause of Christ and steadfastness under persecution.

This letter, written under such circumstances, is full of pathetic tenderness and great solemnity, and one can read all through it the great longing of the apostle for his beloved Timothy.

There are some reasons for believing that Paul's great desire was granted, and that Timothy reached him shortly before his execution; but of this there is no proof.

Without the walls of Rome, during the summer of A. D. 68, tradition affirms that Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, was beheaded.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is thought by many people to have been written by Paul, but its authorship is uncertain. Of this much we are sure: It was written by a Jew to Jewish Christians to prove the superiority of Christianity over Judaism, or to prove that Christianity is the true religion. It was probably written A. D. 68 or 69.

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 15. The possible journey of Paul after his release from prison in Rome.

Plan 15 gives the possible journeys of Paul

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

PLAN 15. POSSIBLE JOURNEY OF PAUL AFTER HIS RELEASE.



Paul's Last Years

after his release from prison. Let the boys and girls fully understand that this is only a probable route.

The trip to Spain is not indicated as there is such great divergence of opinion in regard to it.

Note how many of the Churches that Paul had visited on his missionary journeys he now revisits.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. In how many countries did Paul labor?
2. To what Churches did he write epistles?
3. To what people did he write letters?
4. Who were his most constant companions?
5. To whom did he always preach first on entering a city?

HEART TALK.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course," was Paul's summing up of his life. A good fight meant fighting in a good cause, with a good equipment, and by persistently every day doing his best. He had not completed all the work God wanted done in this world, but he had finished the work God gave him to do. Let us so live that we may say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

finished the work God gave me to do." To do this we must do each day's work as it comes, so that each night we may be able to say, "I have finished my work; I have done what God would have me do to-day."

PRAYER.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." LUKE 23:46.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE APOSTLE JOHN IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

MEMORY VERSE.

"That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord." JOHN 21:7.

BIBLE PICTURE.

1. Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate. Acts 3:1-13.
2. Peter and John sent to the Samaritans. Acts 8:14-24.
3. In the great council. Acts 15:1-11.
4. A leader in the Church. Gal. 2:7-10.
5. A message from John. 1 John, chapter 4.
6. A revelation through John. Rev., chap. 21.
7. The closing words of the Bible. Rev. 22:16-21.

STORY.

Among those whose life and work helped in the formation of the early Church is one who, in a way, stands by himself.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

The apostle John, brother of James, son of Zebedee, one of the first four of the apostles chosen to be with Christ, is a man about whom the Bible does not say very much, but through whom we come more closely in touch with the Spirit of Christ than through any other person. One of the chosen three in the inner circle of Christ's friends, we find him coming still closer to the Master as the "disciple whom Jesus loved."

Are not those words a whole biography? Some one has said that "Peter was the head for the Twelve, but John was the heart." Do not let this mislead us in regard to his character. This apostle of love was also called by Jesus the Son of Thunder.

A quiet, contemplative man he may have been, but he was a man of great force of character and of such keen and sympathetic intuition that he understood Christ as no other disciple did. The only recorded words which he spoke spontaneously are, "It is the Lord."

After the resurrection we find Peter and John close companions, but in every case it is Peter who does the talking and apparently takes the lead.

To John, Christ, as He hung on the cross, gave His mother, and in the home of John she found her home from that time.

The Apostle John in the Early Church

From Paul's letter to the Galatians, it is inferred that John was still in Jerusalem, a leader in the Church, at the time of the great council. Beyond this time, with John as with the other apostles, we have only tradition.

He is supposed to have spent the most of his life in Asia Minor after leaving Jerusalem; but even tradition is meager for some years till he appears as Bishop of Ephesus, which was probably after Paul's letter to the Ephesians was written.

In the Gospel written by John we find the message, not for the Jews, nor for the Gentiles, but for those who already know and love Christ; a message that brings one very close to the heart of the Master and emphasizes the spiritual relationship with Him. In this Gospel he exalts Christ. In his epistles he exalts the Christian life, and in the Book of Revelation, the Church.

It is through these writings that John is known, rather than through the history found in the Book of Acts. The Book of Revelation, though the last book in the Bible, was not the last one written. In the ninth verse of the first chapter, John says that he was on the island of Patmos, where it is supposed that he was exiled for a time at least.

In the messages to the seven Churches in

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

this book, John summarizes all the teachings of all the other books of the Bible, and closes the book with the vision of the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem.

Of the writing of the Second and Third Epistles of John, little is known. The First Epistle of John was probably the last of all the New Testament books to be written, and comes as the last message from the apostle of love, who, as no other apostle, realizes the great fact that God is not alone the Lawgiver and the Judge, but that "God is love."

CRAYON AND PENCIL.

Plan 17. The Seven Churches and the Isle of Patmos.

In giving the field of John's activity we will turn to Plans 1 and 4; on Plan 11 we will find him at Ephesus.

Plan 16 may be made by turning to Plan 1 and filling in the places where, at the time of the death of John, the Christian Church had been established.

SEARCH QUESTIONS.

1. What was the occupation of John?
2. How do we know that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved.
3. Write from memory John 3:16.

The Apostle John in the Early Church



PLAN 17. THE SEVEN CHURCHES AND THE ISLE OF PATMOS.

Short Studies of Heroes of the Early Church

4. How many times is the word love used in 1 John, chapters 3 and 4?
5. What is the last verse in the Bible?

HEART TALK.

"The apostle of love"—what a beautiful name! But what does it mean? Is it not that John learned to love in the way that Jesus loved, and for that reason he learned to understand Jesus and His teachings?

John was not the spokesman; did not get the credit for doing things as Peter did, but that made no difference. He loved Jesus with a love that made him true, loyal, and strong in His service; and to-day, after all these years, we feel that in being called "the apostle whom Jesus loved," he received the greatest honor that could be given to any man.

May we not each one of us love Jesus in the way that John did and come very, very close to Him?

PRAYER.

"Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world. . . . And I made known unto them Thy name, and will make it known: that the love wherewith Thou lovest Me may be in them, and I in them." JOHN 17: 24, 26.

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